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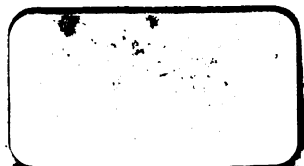
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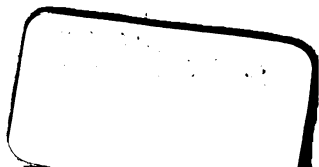
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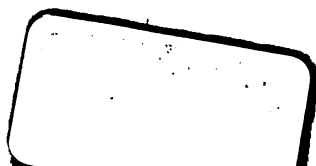




**“YOUR INNINGS.”**



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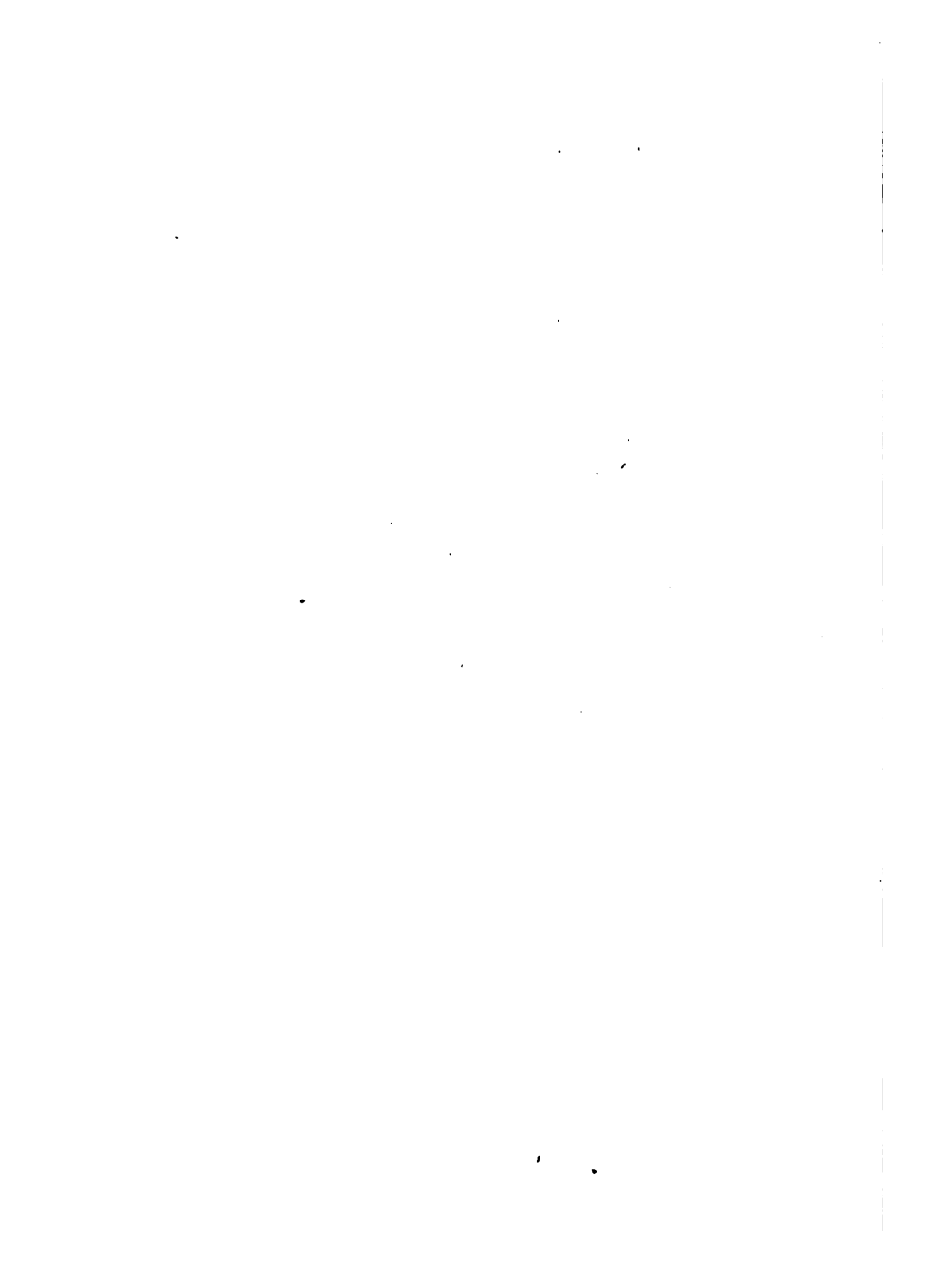




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# “YOUR INNINGS.”



## I.

### “Your Innings.”

**T** was a glorious spring day, and a hundred lads and more were on the cricket-field, and twice as many spectators; for it was a match between two schools, and created no little interest in the neighbourhood.

And now the match begins, and there is good sport, for both sides do well, and the players score large numbers, and it is impossible to tell on which school fortune will smile.

There is fresh interest as each new player takes the bat. “*Your innings now!*” “*Make the best of it!*” “*The game depends much on you!*” Such

are the stirring words which greet each one as he stands by the wicket.

"Well played, William!" "Well run!" "Hurrah!" and clapping of hands are often heard as the friendly strife goes on, and not till nightfall is the great battle of the schools decided.

But there is another game of a far different character in which you are bound to take part. You may never have had a bat in your hand, nor bowled for the player, but in the game of life, you must fill your niche. And may you take your part nobly and well!

Just now you have "*your innings*." School life is your great opportunity. Make the most of it. Do your very best! It is your one chance. You have never had it before. It can never come to you again. It will mar or make you for the years that may follow.

My young brother, you have "your innings," and take advantage of it. Or I would put it in another way. I met lately with an admirable Latin motto. It was on a nobleman's crest, and it is worthy of earth's truest nobility, the wisest and best of her children.

"Vive ut vivas!" "Live that you may live!"  
Live indeed. It has been said:—

"Think truly, and your thoughts shall the world's famine  
feed;  
Speak truly, and each word of yours shall be a fruitful  
seed:  
*Live truly, and your life shall be a great and noble  
deed.*"

Yes, live truly; let life be a great reality. Make  
it a grand and beautiful thing.

Far above the mere killing time, far above the  
idle dream of the castle-builder, still further from  
the slavery of self-indulgence, let life rise high,  
let it look onward and forward to a glorious  
goal.

But let us see such a life in one who led it. I  
will tell you of an old schoolfellow whose image  
is to me one of the most sacred memories of the  
past.

**I** SEE him now. I see him as first I knew *A bright  
example.*  
him, not far from forty years ago. His  
bright, cheery, beaming face, his broad shoulders,  
and strong-built frame; so fond of a joke and  
a good, hearty laugh, and yet a something about

him so different from the rest of us. For as a lad he was guided in everything by the fear and love of God.

At the time of school prayers, there he was, his head bowed, his face hidden in his hands, for he prayed the prayers, while most of us were looking here and there, thinking of our lessons or anything rather than of the petitions which were offered by the head master.

I left school, and for some time lost sight of him. But four years passed away, a new light had shone within, and a new life opened before me. I found my way to the University, and at St. John's College, Cambridge, gave myself to study for Holy Orders.

And my old schoolfellow was there before me; a true brother, one who could help and strengthen those who needed it. Some fifteen years had he already walked in the path which I had but lately entered. And he was the same as ever, the same bright, happy fellow, overflowing with kindness in every look and word. Only he was a step higher on the ladder, more zealous and devoted to the Master he loved. None could long be with him



without discovering where his heart was. Fellow-collegians and the servants about him had now and then a word in season, or a book lent that he had read and valued. When it was possible, he would read a few verses at night, and offer a prayer with the one who had charge of his rooms. His college course was not brilliant for any great University distinctions, but it left a remembrance for good in many who knew him. Again I lost sight of him; in fact, I never saw him again in the flesh.

But in taking my present charge, I was reminded once more of my old friend. Many years previously he had taken the curacy of St. Mark's, and with a spirit of rare zeal and energy entered upon his work.

But it was soon cut short. His ministry in the parish only lasted about eight weeks. In visiting a case of smallpox, he caught the disease, and after four days he died.

On the day before the attack, he had commenced writing a sermon for the following Sunday evening. It was on Rev. ii. 10, but instead of his preaching it, the Vicar spoke from the same words on the great loss sustained by the parish in his death.

When in the same pulpit I began my ministry at St. Mark's, close behind me his monument reminded me of early associations, and also of the need of using well every opportunity for proclaiming Christ's gospel.

"Sacred to the Memory

OF THE

REV. JOHN GOODIER, B.A.,

CURATE OF THIS CHURCH,

WHO BY THE INSURMOUNTABLE, BUT UNERRING,

WISDOM OF GOD,

WAS TAKEN TO HIS REST IN THE NINTH WEEK AFTER HIS ORDINATION,

BY AN ATTACK OF SMALLPOX,

CONTRACTED IN THE DISCHARGE OF HIS MINISTERIAL DUTIES.

*Nov. 20th, 1850. Aged 23."*

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—REV. II. 10.

He is dead, but he lives. He had his innings and he played it well, and his influence is still a living power in the world. At least in one heart he lives, and his memory will never fade till this world passes away from view. Though so soon ended, to him life was life indeed. It was a joyous, blessed life whilst it lasted. It was a life of ever-increasing usefulness. It was a life which was itself

the pledge and the dawning of a glorious life of immortality beyond the grave.

**H**ERE it is in this short motto—"Vive ut *My wish*  
Vivas!" Live that you may live the true life! *for you.*

I don't want to preach to you, but I want to stretch out a brother's hand to help you. Perhaps you are ready to shut up the book. You don't want to read anything that has a serious look about it. You have had a peep into it, and now it must lie on the shelf, whilst you take up the last novel you have laid hands on.

**D**ON'T you think life might be better and *Stop one*  
happier than it is? Would it not be a *moment.*  
pleasure by and by if you could leave a mark for good wherever your lot were cast? Would it not be a thought full of comfort in life's retrospect if it had been full of sunshine to yourself, and through you the light had fallen on another? And is it not possible you might find something in these pages to assist you in this? Don't think that I want you to have a religion of gloom or austerity! Don't think for a second that I am an enemy to football, cricket,

tennis, or a thousand innocent springs of enjoyment. Quite the contrary. I only want you to have the very highest and best of all joys. I only want you to keep clear of mantraps, snares, pitfalls, and dangers of every sort and name. This is the aim of my little manual. My young brother, live—live that you may never die. Live in the present, with an eye to the future. Live the life the very noblest and brightest it is possible to conceive. Live that each successive year may gather to itself power and wealth from those that have gone before. Live that thousands may thank God that ever you were born. Live that your life may be hid with Christ in God. Live that when a whisper tells you of the end, it may be as the voice of a celestial messenger calling you up higher into the presence of the King. Live that you too may receive the crown of life, and the inheritance that shall never fail you.

*"YOUR INNINGS."*

9

Long as I live beneath,  
To Thee O let me live ;  
To Thee my every breath  
In thankful praises give.  
[REDACTED] have, whate'er I am,  
Whate'er I ify my Maker's name.  
Shall magn [REDACTED] all its powers  
My soul andlly Thine, shall be ;  
Thine, whappy hours  
All, all my he to Thee.  
I consecratimage now restore,  
Me to Thine raise thee evermore.  
And I shall f

## II.

*The One Saying.*

**D**ID you ever think of it? For the first thirty years of Christ's life we have on record only one solitary sentence from His lips. Out of that long silence, as far as the Gospels tell, we have only once a voice heard. Yet was it not enough? If you will listen to it, that one saying will come right home to your heart. It will cast a guiding light on every step of your path. For that word was spoken by Christ when He was twelve years old, about the age of many of my readers. It will suit you therefore at this very time, and no less will it direct you every year you live. It is a pattern word for all time and for every age of life.

*"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"* (Luke ii. 49).

**J**OSEPH and Mary had gone up to Jerusalem. *When was it spoken, and why?*

It was a joyous Passover season, and flocks of Jewish pilgrims crowded the way to Zion. Men, and women, and children too, from town, and village, and hamlet, would throng the highways, and often together join in their songs of praise.

It was the first visit of Jesus to Jerusalem, and we can well imagine the deep interest of that journey. From His earliest days His mind had been stored with the record of God's wonderful dealings in the past. And now He comes up to see the city of David and Solomon, and the magnificent temple which was the centre of all their worship. Every object around Him would have its link with the history of God's chosen people.

There was probably another reason, of a different kind, which would greatly deepen the interest of Christ's visit to Jerusalem. Amongst the Jews there was something very analogous to Confirmation amongst ourselves. The child, having been circumcised in infancy, when about the age of thirteen or fourteen went up with his parents to be formally recognised as an adult member of the Jewish

Church. He then declared His allegiance to the God of His fathers, and from that time was recognised as "a Son of the Commandment." It was for this purpose, it is believed, our Lord went up to Jerusalem; and if this be so, it suggests a thought for you.

*Confirmation.*

**D**O not hesitate when you are invited to come forward for Confirmation. Do not be afraid openly to acknowledge your faith and your desire to serve God. And come as you may believe Christ came to Jerusalem. Come full of humble faith, earnest zeal, and love to your Father and His house. Let the solemn "I DO" be to you a great reality. Give yourself up, and all you are, to the happy service of the King of Kings.

*The return.*

**B**UT the feast passes by, and the pilgrims set forth on their homeward way. Meanwhile the "boy Jesus" (R. vers.) remains in Jerusalem. His thirst for knowledge is not satisfied. There is more to hear and more to learn before He returns to the quiet of His village home. There may also have been a further reason for Christ's conduct.



Very tenderly did He love His mother, and He would not needlessly cause her a single tear, nor give her a single moment's grief or anxiety. So, possibly, by his tarrying behind, our Lord would remind her of the purpose of His coming. In the routine of home life at Nazareth the message of the angel may have somewhat faded from her memory, or at least she may too much have regarded Jesus as one of themselves. Her question to Him seemed to imply as much. Her rebuke was gentle, but it was a rebuke—"Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."

Then came the noble reply. In a few short words He teaches her and teaches us lessons never to be forgotten. He brings out His divine parentage. He tells the great mission He has to fulfil. He throws on her forgetfulness the cause of her anxiety. He declares His fixed and unchanging determination to do His Father's will.

"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"

Now that He has borne witness to His Father and His own high calling, He willingly returns to Nazareth. He takes on Him the yoke and bears

it patiently. He, the very Son of God, the well-beloved of the Father, gladly submits to the control of Joseph and Mary. As a loving, obedient son, He spares no pains to add to His mother's comfort. For eighteen years He fulfils the homely duties of the village workshop. He who came to be "a Prince and a Saviour" stoops to the lowly toil of a carpenter, and in daily labour works on till the time of His public ministry arrives.

*A pattern  
for you.*

**W**ILL you not copy the Saviour in this? Now-a-days it is the fashion to make very light of authority. It is a grand thing to cast off respect for parents or tutors. But if the Son of God acted otherwise, will not you also, if you are actuated at all by His spirit? I have known those who have spoken against their parents behind their backs, but the remembrance of it has been bitter as gall and worm-wood. I have known those who have disregarded a mother's counsel, and have spoken roughly and unkindly to her, but when that mother has lain in the grave, and the fifth commandment has been read in church, the heart has cried out, "Too late! Too late!"

My young friend, never let this sin lie at your door. Make it your fixed resolve never to give either father or mother cause for any needless sorrow. When in days to come ye may stand by the grave of one or other, let it cheer you to think you have done your utmost to repay their care over you.

In thought place yourself in the position of those over you. Fifteen or twenty years may pass, and you may have lads of your own; how would you wish them to act towards you? And with respect to those in authority at school, possibly some of you, before twenty-five, may have charge of ten or twenty lads such as you are now. Consider how you would wish them to act towards you, and so act towards those now over you.

Take a word of counsel. You will never regret it. Keep a good conscience both towards parents and tutors. Never let there be anything in your conduct that would make you ashamed to look them in the face.

It will make home life the happier, and school life the happier, and the recollection of both brighter in days to come. It may sometimes be hard to do

it. It may cost you a sneer now and then, and bring you into trouble with those who are always in a scrape. But it will prove best in the end. You will have the comfort of a good conscience and the respect of those whose good opinion is worth the most.

This leads one back to the great saying to which I have referred. It is the firm foundation for all right conduct, at home, at school, or in the world. I want you, like Christ, to be "about your Father's business." Yield yourself and every day and year of your life to Him who loves you, and upon whom you are dependent for everything you possess.

*A preparatory step.*

**H**OW shall this be? How shall you cherish a right aim, and then have the power to carry it out in spite of every obstacle? Believe in Christ's true and genuine sympathy with you. Believe that He loves and cares for you. Believe that He thinks of you, and that your joys and sorrows are not reckoned of small moment in His sight. He has known them Himself, and He can understand and feel for you. He is your best and warmest Friend. Will you

regard Him as such? Instead of looking upon Him as stern and severe, will you take it for certain that in no human breast ever throbbed a heart so tender, so considerate, so ready to forgive and ready to help, as in that of Jesus of Nazareth? True, He hates your sins, for they are His enemies and yours, and if you will hold them fast, you must renounce His friendship. But why do this? Why fly from Him into the dark, gloomy cave of sin and ungodliness? You will find no peace there. You will find nothing but shame and remorse. Nay, rather fly to Him to pardon and rid you of your sins, and then delight yourself in the sunshine of His love. Be sure of this, that He will not rob you of the mirth and joy of early days, but will deepen and permanise it.

Why should we fear youth's draught of joy,  
 If pure, would sparkle less?  
 Why should the cup the sooner cloy,  
 That God hath deigned to bless?

**T**HINK of the immense vantage-ground you "*Well begun, half done.*" possess for life's responsibilities if you make this choice now. You have no long habits of evil to break through. The branch is tender, and can

far more easily be bent in the right direction. The freshness and vigour of youth is a mighty force, and may be turned into the right channel. You have a whole lifetime in which to make progress in Divine knowledge. You have now five talents, even your best and brightest days, to use for good. You may prove a blessing to friends and schoolfellows, and multitudes beside. Is not this worth a little pains and sacrifice and self-denial? Therefore come to Jesus now. Come to Him as if you could see Him with your very eyes. Come to Him believing that He will take you as you are, and make you all you ought to be. Come to Him as your Shepherd, your Guide, your Protector. Cling to Him and cleave to Him with all your heart. Look to Him as your refuge from all evil, and as the wellspring of all your joy. In this way link your life to His glorious life. Think of Him as loving you with more than a mother's love. Think of Him as bestowing upon you all the benefits of His great sacrifice. Think of Him as ever ready to cleanse you from the sin which you humbly confess to Him.

Thus by faith you will be one with Him. You

will indeed and in truth be "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven;" for you will have the inward grace as well as the outward sign of baptism. Placing all your confidence in Christ, He will adorn you with the garment of His righteousness and the grace of His Spirit. Thus the beauty of His life shall be reflected in yours. Whatever is low and mean, selfish, defiled, and unworthy, He will enable you to overcome. Whatever is high and noble and of good report He will bestow. In short, He will deliver you from all that is harmful, and illumine your whole life with the radiance of His likeness and love.


**H**ERE is the power for serving the Lord aright. *The joy of the Lord is your strength.* With Christ as your Friend, close by to cheer and uphold you, you will cherish the same lofty aims which were the spring of His marvellous course. His life will be your life. His spirit will be your spirit. His daily walk will be the pattern of yours. You too will delight to be about your Father's business. You will see it to be both your duty and privilege. It is the life which gratitude demands,

and which brings the purest and most lasting joy. It is the life which glorifies God, and which is the door and portal to the home of His saints.

*Firm and  
steadfast.*

**I**F you follow Christ, you must be firm as a rock, and let nothing turn you back. Like Him, you must be "strong in spirit." Calmly, quietly Christ went on in the path marked out for Him by the Father. Nothing could move Him or shake His steadfast purpose. If we knew all, I believe we should find Christ had in His youth to bear many a rough word and many a scoff from the ungodly lads of Nazareth. If it were so it shook Him not. It led Him into no sin. It neither ruffled His temper nor turned his feet a single step from the path of obedience. Try to be like Him in all this. Be not like a straw on the surface of the current, carried by it in any direction. Be not as a reed shaken by the wind, and bent hither and thither by the blast. Be not as water, which takes the shape of any vessel, or the tint of any colour. Rather be as a pillar in the temple of the Lord, steadfast and immovable. "My heart is fixed, O God, I will sing and give praise."



“LIST ye not that I must be about my Father's *A word about study,* business?” And what is the special business which just now is committed to you? Surely the one thing, the principal thing, is diligent painstaking study. Now you are girding on your armour and sharpening your tools, that you may be fitted for any work and every work to which He may call. This is your one chief duty, to be done for God, and through God's help.

For most of you it is wise not to fix too definitely on the profession or work in which you may be engaged. It is a mistake for lads of twelve or fourteen to say, “I am going to be a merchant,” or “a lawyer,” or “a clergyman.” Lay a good foundation; and let it be wide and broad.

Lay up a good store of knowledge, and let the intellect be well furnished. Then leave life to develop. The way will be made plain. God will point out the path, and your present studies will assist you beyond the range of your own special calling.

Then seize the present opportunity. You have an open door for self-improvement which thousands

have not. Use it well. Be a true, hearty, willing student. Be it your endeavour, not to learn as little, but as much, as you possibly can. Very soon study will become a real pleasure.

I am persuaded that mere duty-work brings little gain. Doing what you are bound to do, and because you are bound to do it—well, it is certainly far better than neglect and idleness. But, for my own part, I can say I learned more in a month when I had an object, and thus threw heart and soul in it, than I learned in a year, or twice that time, when I simply tried to get through my lessons.

I read the other day of a famous hunter who could leap almost any fence or ditch, and he gave it as a maxim, "Fling your heart over, and your horse will be sure to follow."

I am sure if you "fling your heart" into study, success will be sure to follow. A good will for books is more than half the battle, and where it is given, you may anticipate a great reward.

**I** HAVE been speaking of having the heart set to do God's will. But some one who reads this book may have the heart set in quite another direction. You know that you are set upon wickedness. You will scarcely listen to a word about mending your ways, still less will you do it.

*An incident at the siege of Badajoz.*

It reminds me of a difficulty our English soldiers found on one occasion in the Peninsular war. A breach had been made in the walls of Badajoz. It seemed as if our men had but to go up manfully and take the city. But it was a mistake that cost them dear.

Just within the breach, the French had fixed a pyramid of projecting sword-blades, and the soldiers, pressing in, were many of them cut to pieces.

Your heart is just like that pyramid. You are dead set against Christ and His people and His service. You hate the very thought of serious things. Your mind is full of prejudice and false ideas of religion. Even in church you have all sorts of devices to bring sin and the world in and to keep Christ out. Yes, you are all bristling with

enmity and opposition to Christ and His faithful ministers, and when, for a moment, an impression is made on you by some sudden death, or solemn appeal, or merciful escape from danger, there lurks behind a will steadily set against the sway of the Great King.

Now be honest with yourself, my young friend. Is this the case with you? On which side are you fighting? Are you for Christ or against Him? Over the castle does there float the white flag of King Jesus, or the black flag of rebellion and treason?

*Decision.*

**B**RING this inquiry to a point. Be sure, our only true victories are those of Christ over the evil self within. Yield to Him, and He will give victory to the better self, the new man, and will trample down all that is wrong within, and all the power that would harm you from without. Withstand and reject Him, and there is nothing before you but a shameful and terrible defeat. "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet."

If hitherto you have refused obedience to Christ,

let me counsel you *to change sides before it is too late*. It is no bravery, but madness to fight against God. He is your true friend, and by every tie of duty and obligation you are His and His alone. Acknowledge this, and take God's part against that worse self that hitherto has had the dominion.

“Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him” (Ps. ii. 12).

“Man's weakness waiting upon God,  
Its end can never miss,  
For man on earth no work can do,  
More angel-like than this.

He always wins who sides with God,  
To him no chance is lost;  
God's will is sweetest to him when  
It triumphs at his cost.

Ill that He blesses is our good,  
And unblest good is ill;  
And all is right that seems most wrong,  
If it be His sweet will.”

### III.

#### “ Dominus Illuminatio Mea.”

**D**ID you ever take a walk through the Bodleian Library at Oxford? Look around and see these myriads of books, of all sorts and sizes, ancient tomes, huge dusty folios, that are seldom taken down but by learned dons, and countless copies of more modern works on almost every conceivable subject. But turn for a moment in another direction. Look up to the ceiling, and what do you see there? You see hundreds of moulds or shapes of an open Bible, and on each the words which head this chapter, “Dominus illuminatio mea:” “The Lord is my light,” taken from the twenty-seventh Psalm. It is the University coat-of-arms, and is well calculated to point out the character she ought ever to bear as a centre of sound learning and Christian instruction.

May she ever be true to her colours! May she cast out the spirit of Rationalism and Agnosticism and false philosophy which is sadly prevalent! May she never receive back those mediæval superstitions which her sons discarded more than three centuries ago! May she be thoroughly loyal to the revealed truth of God!

That library ceiling, with its innumerable moulded Bibles looking down upon you as you enter, seems to give something of a parable. Those moulded Bibles seem to look down upon the various books on the shelves, and teach us a great truth.

**I**N every way it is the greatest and best of *The Book of God is supreme.* all books. It is pre-eminently "The Bible," *i.e.*, "THE BOOK." It is the fruit of Divine Wisdom, the God-breathed (*θεοπνευστος*, 2 Sam. iii. 16) word, passing through a human channel, coming to us in human language, written by men of like passions as we are, but under the guidance and direction of the good Spirit of our God.

It is manifested to be supreme *by the spur it has given to the human intellect.* All down the ages past what stores of learning have been accumulated in

connection with it! What books it has drawn forth century after century! What time and labour have been expended upon the manuscripts which contain it, upon the versions and translations which have been made, upon the exposition of its various books. Both by friend and foe it has been regarded as an uplifted banner, attacked fiercely by every generation of unbelievers, and nobly defended by all who have learnt to love the truth.

It is supreme in *the region of morals*. Whilst there is necessarily progress, so far as it is a record of the Church rising to the fulness of knowledge and light, yet where was there ever found such a sublime code, resting upon such lofty motives, as that given in the word of God? There have been always those ready to discover blots and blemishes, but what book has ever raised the standard of morality as the Bible? Where has there ever been found anything equal to the book of Proverbs in its own line, or to the Sermon on the Mount, or the glory of Charity, in 1 Cor. xiii., or the lessons of holiness, love, and relative duties, as laid down in the apostolic epistles? Where can we find a pattern-life anything approaching that of Jesus of Nazareth?



It is supreme as *the unfailing spring of true consolation*. You will find no comfort so deep or so lasting as that which comes to you from the Bible.

**R**OSSIBLY your mother placed in your port-<sup>Where to find counsel and help in trouble.</sup> manteau a copy of the Scriptures when you went from home, and you seldom take it out except when you take it with you to church or the school chapel. But you are losing a great deal. If you read it carefully, you will always find a word to cheer you. A school-fellow may vex and annoy you, or an illness may confine you to the sanatorium, or a sore disappointment may come to you at an examination, or a terrible blow may fall upon you in the loss of a parent or of a favourite little brother or sister—whatever the trouble may be, between the two covers of your Bible, if you search for it, you will always find something to comfort and help you.

**A**N orphan lad was living with his grandmother,<sup>An example.</sup> and often felt very lonely and desolate from the loss of his mother, and the want of playfellows

about his own age. One day he was reading the twenty-seventh Psalm. He came to the tenth verse : " When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up." So he fell on his knees and asked the Lord to be both father and mother to him. Nor was his prayer unheeded. He was comforted and strengthened with the thought of God's love, and was enabled to go forth into the world as an active worker for Christ.

I know that school life may not give you much time for Bible study, but do what you can. It may not help you much in reaching a high position in your form or in the University, but it may do that which is far better. I know no better honour than a good place for Scriptural knowledge in the Oxford or Cambridge Local, but infinitely beyond this, a well-studied Bible will be invaluable to you all through life. It will be the greatest possible assistance to you should you take orders, or, as a layman be an active worker in the great harvest-field of the Church. In any case it will be a shield and safeguard to you in every form of temptation, and possibly preserve you from some sin that would bring with it lifelong misery.

**D**URING the battle of Tel-el-kebir, a private of *The shattered Testament.* the Highland Light Infantry had a very narrow escape from death. In jumping into the trenches a bullet of the enemy struck him in the pouchbag at his side, going through a Testament he carried with him. This fortunately turned the direction of the bullet, which would otherwise have done him a fatal injury. As it was, the ball entered the hip and came out at the inner part of the thigh. He soon recovered from the effect of the wound. The shattered Testament was photographed, and a copy of the photograph sent to her Majesty.

That Testament was a shield to the man, and preserved his life. No less is the word of God a shield to the soul. Christ used it as such in His conflict with the tempter. Thrice came the bullet: thrice was it turned aside by a passage of Holy Scripture. "It is written," thrice coming from the lips of our great Captain, tells the young soldier of the cross how alone victory can be won.

*Make God's  
Word your  
shield.*

**B**E well armed in the truths of Scripture, so as to ward off every fiery dart of the Tempter with some warning or promise of the word. Are you tempted to think lightly of the sin of impurity? Think of the noble saying of Joseph—"How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Are you tempted to any talk that may be injurious to another? Think of the warning—"For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Are you tempted to put off the service of God? Hearken—"Son, go work to-day in my vineyard."

Are you negligent of your school-duties? Hearken again—"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord and not unto men." Do you wish to be a true Christian, and yet are afraid you may be rejected? Here is the answer—"Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Are you troubled and cast down? Still there is sure encouragement—"Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." Be well guarded by the teaching of Holy Scripture, and nothing need

disquiet or discourage you. What has been the secret of the holy and useful life many a servant of Christ has led, but his knowledge and comfort in the Scriptures?

**N**OU may have heard the story of this faithful *Robert Noble.* servant of God. He was at a boarding-school, and his sister was starting on her route for Africa, being married to a missionary working in that dark continent. Passing through the town where her brother was at school, she had time, whilst the coach was changing horses, to run to the house, and finding her brother in bed, for it was early in the morning, she greeted him with a sisterly kiss and a loving "goodbye," and then hastily leaving the room as a parting message she said, "*Robert, read your Bible, read your Bible.*" Forty years after, a missionary in India was entering into rest. He had done a glorious work for Christ among the high-caste lads, and now he was near the end. A brother missionary was by his bedside and put to him a question: "I have heard that your sister's last wish for you led you to read the Bible. Is this true?" "Yes," said the dying man, "she

told me to read the Bible, and I've done it, I've done it."

None can tell the rich fruit of that Bible study, nor the number of Hindoo youths to whom it became a priceless blessing.

Take the counsel given by that sister long ago. Whatever be your name, Robert or Richard, Ernest or Harry, William or Frederick, George or John, "read your Bible."

*A kind  
letter.*

**I**F your father or mother wrote to you a long letter full of home news and all sorts of loving messages, I am sure you would find time to read it, and it would be a pleasure and delight to you to do so. Let this be the spirit in which you deal with the Bible. It is a letter from your Father in Heaven. Don't leave it unread and unthought of. Don't regard it as a dull, dreary book, or take it up as a task or a burden, but thank God He has given it to you as your richest treasure, that "through patience and comfort of the Scriptures you might have hope." Then read it regularly. Every day get a few minutes some time or other, and think over a few verses, and single out one to

remember and turn over in your mind afterwards. Search it calmly and quietly. Don't run your eye over it in a hurry. This will do you no good, for the terrible "veil of customariness" will hide the truth from your sight.

Above all, in reading the Scripture, remember the motto on the open Bible with which I began. '*Dominus illuminatio mea.*' Look for light from above. Seek the good Spirit to enlighten you and show you its hidden meaning. Pray earnestly that God would ever be your Teacher.

Read not this book in any case  
But with a single eye ;  
Read not but first desire God's grace  
To understand thereby.

Pray still in faith with this respect  
To fructify therein ;  
That knowledge may bring this effect,  
To mortify thy sin.



AND let the motto teach you another lesson. *Christ the True Light.* The light of the word is to lead you to Him who is "the Light of the world." It is to reveal Christ. It is to point you to Him as the one source of true wisdom, and joy, and hope. Look unto Jesus. Let Him be to you, as to Simeon, a light

and a glory! With Him is the light of pardoning mercy, the light of inner gladness, the light of immortality! Believe in Him. Follow Him. Walk with Him. And thus you shall find the Lord your light and your salvation, and shall rejoice in Him evermore.

"IT IS WRITTEN—AGAIN."

Five pebbles from the brook  
The shepherd David drew ;  
One of those five he took,  
And proud Goliath slew.

He went forth all alone,  
No armour had he on ;  
But with a sling and stone  
The victory he won.

There is a holy stream,  
By God's pure well-spring fed ;  
Bright, polished pebbles gleam,  
Like jewels, in its bed.

The Bible is that book,  
The five books of God's law  
Jesus, our David, took,  
And one from them did draw.



With that, and that alone,  
    He went to meet the foe ;  
And with a single stone  
    He laid the tempter low.

Sing praises to our Lord,  
    Glad Hallelujahs sing,  
Who conquered by His Word ;  
    Our Captain and our King.

Lord, arm us with that Word,  
    With faith in Thee our shield ;  
We need no other sword,  
    Teach us that sword to wield.

Help us like Thee to fight,  
    O give us victory :  
So may we put to flight  
    Our ghostly enemy.

To Father and the Son,  
    And Holy Ghost, to Thee,  
Eternal Three in One,  
    Eternal glory be.

BISHOP C. WORDSWORTH.

## IV.

*The Oak of Thor.*

**E**LEVEN hundred years ago and more, a brave and noble deed was done in Western Germany. In the forest of Thuringia, there stood a gigantic oak of immense girth and height dedicated to Thor, the god of thunder, who was once worshipped in our own island, as our Thursday reminds us.

Around this oak the Pagans had long been accustomed to worship, and a zealous missionary from our own land, Boniface, was determined to destroy it. A rude multitude rushed to defend by arms this monument of the faith of their fathers, and to slay the impious assailant of their god. But Boniface was not afraid; with a few of his clergy he went forth to do his work. Axe in hand, he

levelled the first blows at the mighty trunk. Struck with amazement at his boldness and courage, the heathens looked on in silence. Then, the story runs, a vehement wind arose, and completed the work he had begun. It seemed to those around as a sign from heaven that the missionary was right and they were wrong, and so with one accord they forsook their old superstitions, and turned to the living and true God.

It is a grand story of Christian faith and unflinching bravery, and may give a lesson or two for my young friends to whom I am talking in these pages.

If one day the master of your school were to call you to join him in cutting down some great tree in your grounds, I fancy, how soon there would be a rush to be first, and with a loud hurrah and an axe from the workshop, if you could find one, you would not be behindhand in the work.

**N**OW I do wish every one of you would help *A tree that needs destruction.* to cut down the tree! I can tell you of trees that need cutting down, and, if you will, you may lend a helping hand.

There is the huge tree of our National Intem-

perance, and with its deadly upas shade, it brings poverty, disease, and death to tens of thousands and more every year.

It leads to multitudes of little children being brought up in vice and ignorance, and robs them of all the comfort and joy which you and your brothers and sisters possess.

It robs the home of all its peace and love, and puts a terrible barrier in the way of Christ's Church.

Will you, my young friend, give a good strong blow to remove this giant evil? Will you follow my example, and that of my children, and that of thousands of others, and become an abstainer? Will you have the courage to stand out against the drinking habits of our country, and do your part by all means to put them down?

If you do, I am sure you will never regret it. It may possibly save yourself from much danger and loss. It may save some schoolfellow whose natural temperament may predispose him to excess. You will be a real benefactor of your country, and if God spare you a few years, you may do an untold amount of good. Just now, too, there seems

a favourable wind, so that every effort in the temperance cause may bring double blessing.

**I** SHOULD like you to have a hand in destroy-  
ing another tree also. I know it will not  
fall by a single blow, for it is deeply rooted in the  
soil, and has been the growth of many centuries.

*Supersti-  
tion and  
Idolatry.*

The tree I refer to is the superstition and idolatry that reign in heathen lands. But what can you do? As a warm friend of Christian missions, you may give of your substance, you may influence others, and possibly you may one day go yourself to take a part in the work.

It may interest you to know what an elder school-boy once did.

Some years ago, a missionary in Travancore had an application for a teacher from a distant tribe, but was obliged to refuse because of orders from home to retrench his expenditure. Before the men returned, a letter came from England. It had a curious direction, for it was in type writing, and some of the type was upside down.

It was a letter from a blind lad in a school for the blind sons of gentlemen, promising on his own

behalf, and that of some friends in the school, £4 or £5 a year to help in the good work, and sending the first contribution. It was just the sum needed to send the teacher asked for.

So the missionary granted the request made to him, and in a few years the result of that contribution was the gathering together of a church of no less than four hundred members, who worshipped week by week in a building which they had erected at their own cost.

It all came about through the effort of that blind lad, who is now an able and faithful clergyman in our Church.

Cannot you do something, if you are a true Christian yourself, to forward the work of Christ's kingdom in heathen lands?

*Be courageous.*

**B**UT there is one thing above all else I want you to learn from the story with which I began. I want you to be thoroughly brave and courageous in all that you know to be right. Moral courage to stand alone, if need be; the courage of your opinions; the courage to rebuke sin by silence, by a look or a word; the courage to refuse to fight,

because Christ would not have done it; the courage to act and speak truly, and as you ought, in spite of jeers, and scoffs, and downright persecution; this is no easy thing, and demands more genuine steadfastness and bravery than to go right up to the cannon's mouth in the day of battle.

"O God! give me courage to fear none but Thee!" was the prayer of a young lad who wished to stand firm and do right.

A miner, a Christian man, in the neighbourhood of Wolverhampton, was goaded by the bantering of his mates into the use of some bad language to which he had been accustomed in previous years. But the moment he used it, conscience smote him, and in the presence of the other men he fell on his knees and asked God to forgive him the sin he had done.

Have the courage to own and confess a wrong that you have done; neither be ashamed to be seen by others on your knees.

A schoolboy slept in a room with five others. The first night he alone knelt down. When he arose he asked his companions not to interrupt him by loud talking, if they would not pray themselves.

Before the week was out, four out of the five others followed his example. Who can tell the benefit conferred on the rest in that room by the example of one lad who, like Daniel of old, was not ashamed to pray to his God?

*Prayer a  
privilege.*

**A**ND here let me by the way add a further word about prayer. Look upon it as a great privilege that you are allowed to pray. Here is your heavenly Father, who loves you, who can do everything for you, who can save you out of every trouble, and give you every good thing. He comes and bids you ask Him for what you will, and, within the limit of your highest welfare, He will withhold nothing from you. Whatever is truly good He will bestow. Therefore use your privilege. Go to His footstool. Confess your faults and sins. Ask for pardon, peace, strength, and grace. Leave in your Father's hand your troubles and vexations. In the morning kneel down and ask God to guide you through the day, and by His Holy Spirit keep you from all sin.

Through the day lift up your heart in silent prayer. When you are tempted, when you have



any difficult work, when you meet with unkindness, whatever happens, remember a word of prayer, an upward glance, a secret desire before God, will not be unheeded. And never neglect the evening prayer. Seek fresh cleansing for the past, and God's faithful protection during the coming night.

And forget not that it is for Christ's sake prayer is heard. His blood pleads before the throne. His constant intercession as your great High Priest is ever being offered. His name is all-powerful with the Father. Therefore in prayer let your eye be on Jesus.

"Yea, for me He standeth pleading  
At the mercy-seat above,  
Ever for me interceding,  
Constant in untiring love."



NE other thought. There are three modern *An illustration of*  
inventions that seem to me to illustrate *prayer.*  
the subject of prayer. We have the Telephone, by which sounds are heard at a long distance. Thank God, the voice of prayer uttered in the secret chamber on earth can be heard in the very courts of heaven. No sooner did Hezekiah turn his face to the wall and pray, but a speedy

reply was sent. Isaiah had not quitted the inner court of his palace, but the message came from heaven that fifteen years should be added to the king's life.

We have the Microphone, which brings out the very least sounds. Thus we remember that the least breathing of prayer, the sigh, the desire, the least word uttered in faith, is not lost, but reaches a Father's ear.

We have the Phonograph, which registers sounds and turns them into writing. So each prayer written down, recorded for ever. It will abide amongst the things that continue through eternity. No single prayer passes away, but leaves its mark on him who offers it; and when we pass into another world, our true prayers will meet us there and we shall for ever reap the blessing they have brought.

*A special  
case need-  
ing cour-  
age.*

**I**F your lot is cast in an atmosphere of evil, in a public school or elsewhere, where there is not the high moral tone there ought to be, make up your mind to stand firm as a rock against all that is amiss. Be not a passive re-

cipient of influence, but an active agent on the side of righteousness and truth.

You know that by the law of mechanics a body in motion has far greater power than a body at rest. And if you have the courage to witness for right, and to act manfully when the weak are oppressed, or when deeds of darkness are perpetrated, or when God's law is broken, you will by-and-by become a power for good that you may at first little imagine. Spenser Thornton became such a power at Rugby that Dr. Arnold once stated that he would gladly take off his hat to him in the presence of the whole school. No one can tell the benefit that a manly Christian course confers when evil has the upper hand.

A young man who feared God was staying with a brother who was very wealthy, and an eminent artist. This brother was a careless, ungodly man, and the friends staying in the house when the younger brother arrived indulged at the table in all sorts of blasphemy and profane talk. Late the same night the young man took his bag and left the house, saying to his brother, "I am going away. I cannot stay in a house where God is dishonoured." So he went off, and it was years before he went to

that house again. But his brother at last was humbled and brought to God, and he traced back the first impression to that night when his brother left so abruptly.

*A manly  
spirit.*

**E**XERCISE a brave, manly spirit when you are unjustly or unkindly treated. This may often be the case among a large number of boys. I knew a lad at Marlborough years ago who was falsely accused of stealing cocoa. Another lad kicked him and called him a thief. He found his box broken open, and all his things turned out. He felt utterly desolate and lonely, for he had only just come, and he had no friend to cheer him.

Now in such cases you make matters a thousand times worse if you sulk, or mutter threats of revenge, or get into a towering rage. Be brave, and whatever you lose, don't lose your temper or self-possession. The way to get out of scrapes and troubles with the other lads, is to show a few grains of pluck and good-humour, and a few more of patience; let there be no lack of common sense, and above all a fixed resolve never to speak or act against your conscience, and you will find the storm will soon

blow over, and the more you act in this way, the more you will be respected, and the less liable to repetitions of the same sort of thing.

**R**EMEMBER, too, in all matters of this kind, *The words of Christ.* Christ's precepts are not worn out, nor too high for a school of the nineteenth century:—"Blessed are the merciful." "Blessed are the meek." "Blessed are the peacemakers." "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

All malice and cruelty, tyranny and oppression, hatred and revenge, reviling and evil speaking—all this comes from the devil, both in lads and older people. Practical jokes that cause misery and wrongdoing come from the same source. And if it is needful, you must take up your cross and bear it in resisting such things, if you would keep a good conscience. But how can you do this? It is a battle, and a hard one: how can you win it? Perhaps you are young and inexperienced, and thrown amongst a number of big fellows, and you are no match for them in any way, if they turn against you. How can you stand firm?

*How to  
conquer.*

**L**EARN a lesson from the monument to Lord Lawrence in Westminster Abbey. Of all the memorials there you will not find one that gives a nobler thought. Simply his name and the date of his death, and these words: "*He feared man so little because he feared God so much.*" Here is one great secret of victory. Walk ever in the fear of God. Set God ever before you. Harken to those cheering words of the Prophet Isaiah: "I, even I, am He that comforteth you! Who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker?" . . . Isa. li. 12, 13.

You must exercise faith in God. You must believe in God's power and presence and help. You cannot conquer without. The fortress of the enemy is too strong. The trial is too near and too evident to be withstood, unless you rely upon an Almighty arm.

"The righteous is bold as a lion." This is true, but only when the righteous trust fully in their strong Redeemer.

**I**N one of the campaigns of the late Duke of Wellington, there was a very strong position, *Taking hold of a mighty hand.* with a brave little garrison of the enemy, that had successfully resisted the force sent against it. The Iron Duke singled out a young officer of great daring, and told him to take his company and reduce the fort. "Give me but one grasp of your conquering right hand and I'll do it," said the officer. And there, in the presence of the men, he gave him his hand, and in the fixed determination imparted by that grasp he went and accomplished the work.

Take hold, my young brother, of the conquering right hand of our great Captain. Believe in His help. Make Him your strength. See Him ever present with you in the conflict. And so shall you succeed. You shall not be worsted in the evil day. Even the strongholds of Satan shall fall before you.

And remember the day of reward. Unworthy though you may be in yourself, the King will not forget your valour for His kingdom.

*A lesson  
from  
Greece.*

**I** HAVE heard that in olden times there was an annual commemoration at Athens of their great heroes, when their ashes were carried at the head of the procession. But at another end of the procession an empty urn was carried, in remembrance of the unknown heroes of Greece.

In a better world none of Christ's true soldiers will be forgotten. Known or unknown to man, they are all known to Him who faithfully led them through every danger. And they shall receive a far nobler recompense than that with which Greece could honour her sons. The Master's "Well done," and His eternal presence, shall be their joy for evermore.



## V.

*A Strange Companion.*

**I** HAVE a dear friend, and when he was a lad he had rather a curious fancy. Somehow or other he found a small snake, and he took a marvellous liking to it. So he carried it about with him, and when he went off to school he took his friend with him. He used to keep it often in his sleeve; and even when he went to church, sure enough he took the little reptile with him even there. At last some of the other boys were thoroughly frightened. Some day or other they expected it would secretly glide into their quarters, and perhaps give them a bite. So it came to the ears of the headmaster, and at once, to the grief of my friend, his companion was killed. No doubt it was a capital good thing to be free from such a companion, as, when

it had grown a little bigger, it might not have proved so harmless as at first it was.

But what has this to do with you? Perhaps, my young friend, more than you think. Will you let me talk plainly to you for a little? I do love the lads, and if you would believe it and listen to me as a father or an elder brother, there is something I want to say to you that might save you from a world of sorrow and trouble.

You think it was a strange fancy of my friend, and that he was well off when he was rid of his companion without harm. But there is a snake, or a serpent, or whatever else you may call it, that creeps into many a school and leaves many of the lads with a bite that injures them for life. They never are the same as before. They carry the mark of it to their graves. In many cases it takes all the brightness out of their lives. It always brings with it a bondage and tyranny which follows them every step of their journey. Only lately a few young men were talking over the matter. They came from fifteen public schools, and in every one of them this terrible enemy was known to exist.

I daresay many of you have guessed already what I mean. If not, I will tell you. There is a sin of secret impurity frequent among lads, and the misery it causes no tongue can ever fully tell. I know it for a fact. I have had numbers of letters from themselves about it. I have the experience of others which has been far greater than my own. You may take it, my young friend, as a truth that none can gainsay, that through this sin a dark veil has been cast over the lives of tens of thousands of schoolboys, and that all the freshness, and gladness, and power of youth have perished beneath it.

**B**UT stay a moment before I add more. It is *A word to parents.* quite possible that some father or mother, looking over this book, may shrink from any reference being made to this painful subject. You think, and perhaps rightly, that the mind of your boy is pure and unstained, and you think you had better leave well alone.

But do you know what a perfect battery of temptation may ere long open upon him? You may be very careful about the tone of the school

to which you send him, but you cannot find one where there are not some evil influences at work. And it is very likely your boy may come across them. The question is this, Shall he go armed or unarmed into the battle? If in any matter, it is true in this, "Forewarned, forearmed."

I have not a doubt that a few kind words from a parent, or a message from a little book like this, may be just the shield the lad needs, and may be a means of securing him from a life-long trouble. As I want to bring the matter very plainly before my readers, let me give you a few illustrations of the way in which the evil works.

Here is a lad destined for an active business life. He has fair means and an open door for success; but in the present day everything depends on energy, and diligence, and readiness to lay hold on the present opportunity. But he has learnt at school this filthy habit, and it has enfeebled and weakened him, and he is a poor lifeless fellow, without any go or dash about him.

Employers soon discover that he does them no good, and he loses one situation and then another, and at last becomes an incumbrance upon his

parents; or if he has no one to turn to, he sinks lower and lower, until he ends his days in a parish workhouse. This is no mere imaginary picture. In the school to which I went forty years ago, there was one who was a leader in polluting others. He was then in good position, but the last I heard of him was that he was in the infirmary of a London Union.

Take another case. Here is a bright young fellow, well educated from his earliest days, and of real talent. Great hopes are entertained of his attaining a high position, and gaining a good degree at the University.

But by and by he begins to fall behind in the race. Close application to study becomes impossible. A languor which is hard to resist comes over him, and he gradually loses heart; and instead of eminence, he only just passes, or is plucked, and all his hopes of future advancement are dashed to the ground. Can you tell the secret? I think you may guess it.

Or take a third case. I see a young lad who thinks of the medical profession. He has tasted in secret the poisoned cup of self-abuse, and now he

is placed amidst the perils of London or Edinburgh, and when temptation comes in a more open form, he has no power of self-restraint, and at once he is drawn into the vortex of a fast life, with all its snares and dangers, its briars and thorns, and likely enough he makes an utter shipwreck, and never regains the position he has lost.

There is not seldom another result. Here is a delicate lad with some tendency to consumption in the family. With care through the critical period of youth he might overgrow it, and do a good day's work in life. But this enemy comes in. It saps the springs of life and health, and there is no chance for him. Before he has reached twenty, death has laid his cold hand upon him, and he lies in the churchyard or cemetery, the victim of his own heedlessness, or of the cruel wickedness of older companions, which he had not the courage and strength to resist.

But perhaps there is another issue. The happy innocence of early days has been exchanged for that knowledge of evil which is so easy to our sinful nature. There comes a dark period in that lad's history, but not for long. Better thoughts return.

Perhaps through a mother's prayers, or a faithful friend, or an earnest sermon, or a text fixed in the heart by God's grace, there is the turning over of a new leaf, and an arising to a nobler life. Ah! but the bitter regret, and the painful struggle, and the constant fight with the power of this sin—who can describe but those who have known it? The Christian life would have been a far easier one but for this. But perhaps for years this one temptation dogs his steps, and causes difficulty without end. Blessed is he who arises from the fall, and conquers. But a thousandfold more blessed is he who through God's help stands firm at first, and carries through life the consciousness that a Divine hand has kept him from falling.

My young friend, believe me, these things are true. I feel sure I am right in saying there is scarcely a school in our land from which instances like these might not be taken. Multitudes have discovered too late their mistake when the iron of their bondage-chain has entered into their soul. There is no doubt about it. Ask the doctors, and they will tell you. Ask those who have been at school, and they will tell you. I do entreat you

with all earnestness, learn your danger, and spare yourself sorrow, and loss, and peril.

*Words of  
counsel in  
the matter.*

**T**RUST you see the peril, and determine utterly to turn away from it. Thank God if you do. If this book were only the means of saving one lad from this frightful pitfall, I should reckon all the hours and days spent in writing it to have been abundantly rewarded.

But let me help you in this resolve, and possibly enable you to help others.

*Look at every breach of purity as a most deadly sin.* It is sin against yourself; it is sin against those who love you, and are doing all they can for your welfare; it is sin against a holy God, who sees in the dark as well as in the light, and who would have you holy as He is holy.

Remember this. All such doings are downright wicked and abominable in His sight.

*The testi-  
mony of  
Holy  
Scripture.*

**L**ISTEN to such words as these: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works



of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, . . . for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."

"There shall in no wise enter into it [*i.e.* the heavenly city] anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, . . . but they that are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Let this be a settled point with you. Don't blunt the edge of conscience by any kind of excuse. Don't plead that others act amiss, or that it does no harm but to yourself. It is sin—deadly sin—neither more nor less, and as such you must treat it. There is a suitable prayer in Ps. xix. (Prayer Book version): "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse thou me *from my secret faults. Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins*, lest they get the dominion over me: so shall I be undefiled and innocent from the great offence. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be alway

acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer" (vers. 12-15).

Mark here how one sin leads to another. Secret ones soon become presumptuous ones, and these get the upper hand. Therefore you need to pray against the very least sin.

Hear we the Shepherd's voice,  
Pray, brethren, pray :  
Would ye His heart rejoice,  
Pray, brethren, pray.  
Sin calls for ceaseless fear,  
Weakness needs the Strong One near,  
Long as ye struggle here,  
Pray, brethren, pray.

There is another point the passage in Ps. xix. brings out very clearly. Sins, secret and presumptuous, are closely connected with the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts.

If you want to be safe, you must begin here. You must neither speak nor listen to words and suggestions that will pollute the mind. The first time a schoolfellow begins in such a strain, let there be no mistake *that you won't have it*. It may do him good. If he begins a second time, I should advise you henceforth to keep as far from him as you can.

**D**ON'T go near it. Better go the other side the *"Mind the paint."* road than get a spot that won't soon be gone.

There must be no truce with this sin, and no playing with it. Our thoughts and imaginations are very soon heated with bad thoughts and foul ideas, and you must keep them at a distance. Never read a book where you are likely to meet with them. Never go to the classic writers to find out passages which had better never have been written. Still less take the holy Book of God and use it for the very opposite purpose for which it was given. Beware of all riddles and rhymes and songs that have a wrong tendency. Beware of all trains of thought that inflame the passions. Keep out of the dangerous channel, if you would avoid the cataract. "Keep off the greased plank," if you would escape a fall. Make a fixed resolution to turn your thoughts to other things. Keep the mind well occupied. Though baffled again and again, persevere, and you will find the path of safety made plain before you.

Remember you are a Christian lad. You bear upon you the name of the holy child Jesus. Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. You are

pledged to renounce the devil and all his works, and the sinful lusts of the flesh. You are called to be a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ, and to fight under His banner. Be true to your calling in this matter of which I am writing. It will bring comfort to yourself, benefit to those about you, and honour to the Captain of your salvation.

Perhaps I may add one or two other words of help. Carefully avoid the use of stimulants. It is one of the benefits of total abstinence that it is a great safeguard against temptations of this kind. It removes that which is often a stumblingblock. It makes it much easier to live a pure and chaste life. Again and again the first wrong step has been taken under the excitement arising from strong drink.

Then another suggestion. Use plenty of cold water, and take plenty of physical exercise. This latter is one of the outlets for energy and spirit that our Father gives to us. Go in heartily for games. Of course there are dangers in cricket and football, and other such healthy employments, but I believe they do infinitely more good than harm. Then let all the spare corners of time be well filled up. Do

something, and something that is worth doing. Learning carpentering and the like is capital work for a rainy day, when there is time for it. Good wholesome reading, history or travels, and not excluding fiction, if it has a pure ring about it; music, or any special study that is a pleasure to you—all I say is, don't idle away the time and give room for the tempter, but be alive and at work, and thus you will be more fitted for the active duties that may one day be incumbent upon you.

**S**OME one who reads these pages may be ready *A word to the troubled.* to give up hope. You have been caught in the snare, but see no way out. My young brother, don't despair. Put yourself to a little self-denial by telling your father, or some Christian friend, or your home doctor. It may be painful for the moment, but you will be thankful afterwards. *Don't take underhand courses about the matter.* You may spend your money, and do yourself real harm. But trust those who love you, and follow their advice. Above all, go to the good Physician. Put your case in His hand. Body and soul He can heal; and

when you go to Him, He will not despise nor reject your petition.

*"Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no Physician there?"* "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed: Save me, and I shall be saved, for Thou art my praise." "I sought the Lord and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." "They looked unto Him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed."

Courage, brother, do not stumble,  
Though thy path be dark as night;  
There's a star to guide the humble,—  
Trust in God, and do the right.

Perish policy and cunning!  
Perish all that fears the light!  
Whether losing, whether winning,  
Trust in God, and do the right.

Trust no lovely forms of passion,  
Fiends may look like angels bright;  
Trust no custom, school, or fashion,  
Trust in God, and do the right.

Some will hate thee, some will love thee,  
Some will flatter, some will slight;  
Cease from man, and look above thee,  
Trust in God, and do the right.

—NORMAN MACLEOD.

VI.

*Pro Aris et Focis.*

**W**ITH this war-cry the old Roman waxed valiant and strong. "Our altars and hearths," our religion and our home,—never failed to call out all his courage and determination. Woe be to the enemy that approached when this was the issue at stake! And I should like the same thought to draw forth your valour. I want you too to fight manfully for "religion and home." In the struggle and the conflict of every day let these two things be very dear to you, and let this be manifest in the spirit in which you deal with them.

**B**E a good soldier on behalf of the pure faith of *Pro aris.* the gospel of Christ. Christianity is far away the best friend and benefactor the world has ever had, and yet too many in our day assail her with

every possible weapon. They hate her, they revile her, and bring against her all kinds of false charges. They ignore the accumulated evidence of centuries as to the power of Christian truth to cleanse the conscience, to raise the character, to heal the woes of men. They cannot explain away the evidences of Christ's resurrection, nor the marvellous growth of His Church. But they try to find contradiction between science and religion, or cast ridicule on miracles, or urge *à priori* objections to some of the doctrines of the gospel.

*Be firm as  
a rock.*

**L**ET none of these things move you. If there are difficulties in Christianity, there are far more in unbelief. "Hold fast the faithful Word." In company with the best and holiest men that have ever lived, revere the Bible, and search carefully into the evidences of its Divine origin. Let your true title be that which belongs to our beloved Queen, "Fidei Defensor," a defender of the faith. Amidst hosts of unbelievers and sceptics, may you stand firm on the rock of God's truth, and, in spite of every shaft of the enemy, proclaim yourself *a Christian!*

In a persecution at Lyons many centuries ago, a



youth was charged with being a Christian. And he gloried in it. He was brought up for examination, and in answer to every question proclaimed his allegiance to Christ.

Where do you live? "Christianus Sum." What is your profession? "Christianus Sum." Why will you not worship the emperor? "Christianus Sum." And no other answer would he give, so they hurried him away to a cruel death.

**T**RUST also that you will be faithful to that *The value of the English Church.* reformed branch of Christ's Church established in this land. When rightly administered on the basis of her Articles and Services, the Church of England is a noble witness for God's truth. The sublime character of her Liturgy, the way in which she brings everything to the test of the Word of God, her eleventh Article declaring free justification by faith only, her teaching as to the necessity of good works in the twelfth Article and in her Collects, her value for antiquity in retaining all that is pure and scriptural in the services of former times, and her careful exclusion of the errors that had crept in, her exquisite Communion service, leading us to cast our-

selves down in lowliest contrition, and then lifting us up to join with angels and archangels before the throne—all this is not found combined in any other Church; and I believe it to be a most serious injury to themselves when persons forsake her communion. Hold fast to the Church of England. Whilst you love all who love the Saviour, do your utmost in promoting the welfare and prosperity of the Church of your fathers. By your own consistency, by your deep interest in her services, by readiness to help your clergyman, and by all other means in your power, let her suffer no loss at your hands.

*"Pro  
focis."*

**B**UT I want you also not to forget the other thought in the old Roman's war-cry. Let it be a strong point in your character to have a great regard for home ties. You must think of the "focis" as well as the "aris." You must cherish a very warm affection for parents, and for every one in your own home. Think of them every day. Think of their wishes for you. Think of their pleasure when the report goes home with "G." "G." "G.," "N. C.," "Making rapid progress," and the like, and think

of their distress when a bad report comes, or a painful letter from one of the masters.

A young officer was going into battle for the first time. A companion was shot dead by his side, and he was terrified and turned to flee. But one who saw it bade him consider *what his mother would think of his cowardice*, and he turned again and fought bravely the rest of the day.

**P**ERHAPS you have little idea what a treasure *A store of home-love.* of love, and prayer, and interest those at home extend towards you. I shall never forget an instance in which I saw this. It was a beautiful country Vicarage, and the Vicar had lost almost all once dear to him. The wife was asleep in the churchyard, and several dear children were lying beside her, but one boy remained, and he was at a public school. And in that father's breast there was intense affection for him. Wherever the conversation began, it always came round to the same point—something about the “dear lad at school.” Everything ran into one channel. To add to his comfort, to promote his welfare, to rejoice in his success, to hope

in his future prospects—this seemed the one thing for which that father lived.

*Your own  
home.*

**M**ORE or less is this the case in your home and in thousands of homes. Perhaps a hundred miles or more away from you is that kind father or mother of yours, and, it may be, you little think of the prayers offered for you, and how many times in the day a heart-visit is paid to your school, to get a sight of what you are about. Does the lad always remember this as he should? Is there the warm response there should be? Is there a real desire to please when at home and as true an effort when away? Is there always the considerateness in little things there might be? Is a genuine respect cherished for them and evidenced by word and deed? Is the letter as regular at home as the one received at school? And is it as full and interesting with particulars as it might be made? Is there ever anything spoken of the home ones amongst school-fellows that it would not be pleasant they should hear? Is there ever a word spoken to them that has been as a load on the heart when you have been fast asleep?

**I** OFTEN think of a story that a good *The Rev. W. Arnol.* man tells of his early life. His father had bidden him do some little work to which he went very slowly and grudgingly. So his father called him back, and asked him how much he had cost him since he was born. Then he told him he had "cost him a hundred pounds and more," and the hundred sovereigns seemed to glitter before his eyes, and did him more good than a hundred stripes, for he always afterwards tried to repay his father all that he had done for him.

Ah! if you knew the pains and the pounds, the prayers and anxieties, perhaps the tears and troubles and heart-aches, you have cost those who love you, I think it might stir up many a wish and effort to give back the best you can.

And when any one does this, whether as a boy or in later days, it does bring such happiness both to the parent and the child. "A wise son makes a glad father;" yea, and a glad mother too; yea, and brother or sister too, and it all comes back home into his own heart!

*A bright  
example.*

**I** HAVE read of one who had a widowed mother in a very humble station, and as he rose step by step, through his own diligence and perseverance, he always came home and told his mother himself of the success he had attained. At length, having been curate and rector, he was appointed Bishop of Lincoln. Again he sought the little cottage where his mother dwelt. But he was afraid the shock might be too great for her. So he bethought him how he might break to her the good news of the unlooked-for honour that had been granted him. And he did it very wisely. He told her that he was coming in the afternoon, and going to bring a Bishop to tea with her. And only after she had been long looking out for the expected guest, he told her that the Bishop had already partaken of her fare.

*A contrast.*

**L**ET me give an example of a very contrary spirit. A young man went out to India in the Civil Service, and settled down to an easy and luxurious life in a northern station. He lived and died there many years afterwards, without

ever once returning to England. A judge settled not far off was commissioned to examine his effects, look over his papers, as he died without any relatives about him. Most sorrowful was the perusal of a box of letters which he had to look over. They were chiefly from his most affectionate parents, and those of an early date were full of anticipations of a visit which they hoped he would pay. But selfishness and ease won the day. He never once went back to see them. And in the letters there was the gradual fading away of a hope which was the one desire of their later years, but which was never fulfilled. At length death stepped in and closed the long series of letters, and then a few years more and death carried off the son who almost broke his parents' heart.



WHICH of these two sons do you most resemble? *A question for you.*

Is there anything of that wretched spirit of proud independence that thinks it a manly thing to use all sorts of slang words about father and mother, that thinks nothing of wasting their money, disappointing their expectations, and deceiving them in a thousand clever ways? God save you from

manliness of this sort! God keep you from laying up bitter remorse for yourself hereafter!

May it be just the other way! Have the courage to act as a dutiful and loving son ought to do. Be manly enough to own that your father may be a little wiser than you are, and that you wish to follow his will! Be brave enough to stand the taunt of one who jeers at you for "being tied to your mother's apron-string." Stand up manfully for your home; never talk of any faults that may be there, but gladly tell of the kindness and happiness that is found within its walls.

There is a beautiful saying in the Talmud—"The world is kept alive by the breath of school children." And sure I am that the little world of each home is kept alive by the breath of the schoolboy when that breath is fragrant with respect for parents, gentleness and tenderness for the little sister or brother who looks up to you for guidance.

*Be always  
down for  
prayers.*



EVER forget one point. Manifest your real love for the home altar. Family prayer is a time of true blessing, when, by means of it, each and all are brought nearer to God and each



other. But what about the sisters being down to prayers, and the brother coming when prayers are over and breakfast just beginning? What a slur it casts on a parent's arrangements, and on the name of our God! What a voice to servants that the young master cares more for eating and drinking than for the worship of the King! Nay, my young brother, let not this be so with you. Never let sloth and late rising rob you of the privilege of joining together in prayer with those you love. It has been truly said, "A family without prayer is like a house without a roof;" and if you neglect the call to worship, are you not doing your part in making it impossible?

Around each pure domestic shrine  
 Bright flowers of Eden bloom and twine,  
 Our hearts are altars all;  
 The prayers of hungry souls and poor,  
 Like armed angels at the door,  
 Our unseen foes appal.

**T**HERE is one other point of importance. In *Patience under the cross*, some cases a lad is found who imagines he can find in his home some justification for an unfilial and undutiful spirit. He imagines there to be a want of

sympathy with him. There is an unreasonable strictness. There is not the liberty or the luxury which other schoolfellows possess. Be it so. You may possibly be right in thinking this. But look at the other side. Think of all that has been done for you. And think of the anxieties and burdens that may press on your parents' heart; think of your own faults as well as theirs, and then do your own part, whatever may seem lacking that you would desire. Be sure of this, that your only safe plan is to submit to your father's wish and not to fly in his face and in any way grieve or dishonour him. You may plan and scheme all sorts of devices to escape from what seems irksome to you, you may act in a deceitful, underhand way, you may flatly refuse obedience, or run away from home, or anything else you will, but depend upon it, an hour will come that you will rue it. Whatever excuse you may make to yourself for wrongdoing, it cannot hide the sin of it, or prevent its bitter fruits.

*A Buddhist  
saying.*



THE Buddhists have a saying which is quite a household word amongst them. "*The done, done deed, and the sure, sure reward.*" And it must be

so. Sow the wind, and you will reap the whirlwind. Sow the thorns, and a plentiful crop of briars will be sure to spring up.

But if you take a better path, if you bear patiently the cross laid upon you, in the end a blessing will come out of it. You may have many a good cry, you may feel there is not the brightness in your life there might be, but it will prove a bit of discipline that will help you in days to come.

Remember Him who cares for you, and marks all you have to bear. Bring it all to Him. "He heard the cry of the lad" when Ishmael cried to him in the desert. And when you find yourself in the desert, so lonely, and desolate, and unhappy, tell it in the ear of your heavenly Father, and know that He hears your desire, and will never leave you nor forsake you.

**T**O some there may be a temptation of a very *An opposite danger.* different kind. It may seem to you to bring no harm or peril, nevertheless the injury may be very great indeed. Perhaps you are the only child, or the youngest, but for this or some other reason you meet with special indulgence in your home. You

have been allowed to have very much your own way, to do what you like, to eat and drink what you like, to rise and go to bed when you like; in fact, though but young, you seem pretty much your own master, and it is very pleasant and very much to your taste that this should be so.

But, my young friend, just stop a moment. What about the formation of your character? What about your progress in study? What about your future usefulness? Suppose by and by the wind veer round, and you should have to face rough storms and blasts of adversity, how would you manage then? Suppose hereafter you should be entirely dependent upon your own efforts to succeed in life, and you have no foundation on which to build: what would be the result?

Do take my advice. *If others do not control or check you, put a strong curb on yourself.*

*Go to the  
wheel, and  
guide your  
ship.*

**L**ET conscience assert its own rights. Let common sense and sound judgment, and above all, the plain precepts of Scripture, come to the rescue. Don't waste that time which is now beyond all price. Don't injure or ruin your health by habits of self-

indulgence. Don't mar your future prospects by letting life degenerate into a sort of flabby, jelly-fish existence, which will be only a burden to yourself and every one else. "Live, that you may live." Open your eyes to see your danger, and set yourself resolutely to fight against it. And thus, in spite of the danger you may be in, your life will be a noble and a blessed one, and like a good man of a century ago, you will "thank God that ever you were born."

**T**HERE are other battles to fight, my boy,  
 Than the battle of which you speak ;  
 There are battles which none can win, my boy,  
 But the lowly in heart and meek ;  
 There are battles in which earth's mightiest fall,  
 And the strong ones are the weak.


*True  
 manliness.*

There's a battle, my boy, with the world's rude laugh  
 At the lessons our Saviour taught,  
 And many a battle with self before  
 We can do the things we ought ;  
 A battle which, not for the praise of men,  
 Is in secret and silence fought.

If in the battle of life, my boy,  
 Thou would'st stand on thy Captain's side,  
 With the white-robed hosts that follow the Lamb,  
 The called, and chosen, and tried,  
 Thou must take up thy cross, denying thyself,  
 And follow the Crucified.

## VII.

### Three Bits of Good Advice.

 EARS ago I had the chance of hearing one of our English bishops give a talk to working men. It was a Mission season, and the men crowded in and filled up every niche of the school-room. Nor did they come in vain. Words of counsel were spoken which would do them good for life, if they followed them.

Three sentences contained the summary of the address. I dotted them down in my note-book for future use, and it seems to me they are quite as well suited for schoolboys as for the working men to whom they were spoken.

Here they are: "Take heed to your principles." "Take heed to your habits." "Take heed to your companions."

**F**IRST of all—"Take heed to your principles." *Your principles.*

A man's principles are the strength or weakness of his whole life and conduct; and if a lad hopes to prosper, let him cherish principles of action that will wear well, keeping him from temptation, and guiding him through times of difficulty. Not far from where I live there is a wall built of bad bricks. No doubt at first it looked well enough, but after a frost the bricks began to yield, and now one-half of them have broken away, and by and by, unless first pulled down, the whole wall will crumble and fall. These bad bricks are like bad principles received into the heart. They will prove the ruin and destruction of all that is good and valuable in life.

**B**EWARE of accepting the creed of the Secularist or the Agnostic. There is truth, if *Beware of harbouring the doubt and unbelief that is abroad.* only men had eyes to see it. There is evidence for the gospel of Christ, if men desired it, and could search for it. If men reject the gospel, what can they give you in its place? What better Bible can they offer you if you give up the old Bible that has

been a light and comfort to those who have gone before us? When clouds are round about, and troubles come thick and fast, and life seems scarcely worth living, where can you go if you have no Bible, and no Saviour, and no promise to rest upon, and no bright home preparing for you?

*Expediency  
no safe  
rule.*

**B**EWARE of following what you imagine to be expedient at the time. Caiaphas was the apostle of this doctrine. He judged it expedient for the Jewish nation to put Christ to death. But it was their crowning sin, and brought destruction to their city, and centuries of misery and exile to the Jewish people. You must not follow this treacherous foe. It is like the wreckers' light in days gone by. It will lure you on the rocks, where you will make shipwreck of everything. There is no sin to which you may not be enticed, if you act only to avoid present discomfort, or to insure present advantage. The only thing that is really expedient in the long run is to do right under all circumstances, and never to swerve from the path of duty.



**B**EWARE of making self the end of your ex-<sup>Putting  
self first.</sup>istence. Look at Cicero. He wished to gain a great name, and to be regarded as the saviour of his country. But it was the very reverse. He did her harm and not good. And the secret was that everything turned upon the pivot of self. He was fickle and changeable, because he sought popularity, and made it his idol.

Let it not be so with you. Do what is right, whether you are praised or blamed for it. Do what you believe to be your duty, whatever be the issue. Then if the other boys think and speak well of you, it will not be at the loss of a good conscience. And never trust in your popularity. It is very like a weathercock. North, south, east, and west—it is always veering round. And if perchance you should lose favour for a time, it may be a torment to you; but do your duty, and go on your way, remembering you have the favour and love of God. The moon does not turn out of its course because the dogs may bark at it. So do you calmly go forward to do the will of God, and remember He can turn the hearts of your schoolfellows to you in His own time

and way. "When a man's ways please the Lord,  
He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with  
him."

*Guile and  
deceit.*

**B**EWARE of everything in the way of deceit,  
dishonesty, or double-dealing.

Petty thefts and dishonest practices are not yet quite banished either from home or school. A lad begins with taking something from his parents that he had no right to touch, and when he gets to school the evil grows. It may be a pencil, or some very trifling article, or possibly food in some shape, or stamps, or a stray copper that is left about; but whatever excuses he makes to himself, God marks him—"THIEF."

I knew a lad who took a few pictures from another lad, and forty years after he remembered it to his sorrow. "Conscience is a thousand swords." And whilst the slight advantage or pleasure is very soon gone, the regret and remorse last through half a lifetime.

*Deceit as to  
lessons.*

**B**UT this evil of petty dishonesty comes out far more frequently in another way. Lads shut

their eyes to the sin of using cribs, translations, and the like in place of genuine study. I knew a lad get a prize at school for extra work in the holidays by translating some of the Psalms into Latin. But he had no right to it, for he copied them for the most part out of the Vulgate, of which he happened to possess a copy.

Now all such practices, and everything akin to them, must be shunned and abhorred by every one who is right-minded. They are acted lies. They are mean and unworthy of one who would carry a fair name. They are a real injury to those who use them. They hinder the very object of school-life, and put a barrier in your own path. You get accustomed to shirk hard toil, and are less able in the future to meet the difficulties you must meet with. You imagine that you very cleverly *do* the master, but you really rob yourself out of the benefit you should be gaining by study.

**I**NSTEAD of these things, let there be thorough *Sincerity a precious jewel.* uprightness and sincerity in everything.

Whether you make a bargain with a schoolfellow, or have pecuniary transactions with another, or are

engaged in study, let one principle always rule. Be true as steel. Be sincere in everything small and great. In the library of Frederick the Great a lad was one day playing. The emperor opened a book of French fable and asked the lad to translate one. The lad did it in splendid style, and received no slight commendation for it. But the honest little fellow at once confessed, "Your majesty, I had that fable for my lesson with the tutor the other day."

His granduncle was more delighted with his honesty than with his cleverness. He took him a walk in the garden and pointed to a lofty obelisk. "Look at that; its uprightness is its strength." The lad afterwards became Frederick William the Third, and often quoted the advice given to him.

*The eye of  
God.*



AS an aid in carrying out this principle, often remind yourself that you are ever under the eye of a Father in heaven. "Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long."

Especially important is the recollection of this to monitors, prefects, and those who have any sort

of authority in the school. You have very great influence over the younger boys and those who have lately come to the school, but remember there is one who marks how you use it. You are not to use your influence for your own pleasure, or just as your own fancy may suggest, but as a solemn trust committed to you. And to remember that God is always near will guide you in doing this. I do not wish this thought to be to any one of you a fear and a dread, but a joy and a strength. Of course if you live in any sin, the thought must be painful that the searching eye of God is upon you, and you will try to put it away. But if you wish to do right, it will be no slight help to you to know that your Father is near, and delights in the very least effort you make to please Him.



LAD who loves his father will not work or play less happily because that father happens to be standing near. And if you love your Father in heaven, to see Him with you in your studies, in your play hours, in your games, and at all times, will be a source of unspeakable comfort to you.

*An illustration.*

*Keep free  
from debt.*

**I**T is a capital thing also to make it a fixed principle in life to deny yourself rather than borrow money and run into debt. The old proverbs are worth remembering, and are as true for schoolboys as for any one else—"He who goes a-borrowing goes a-sorrowing;" "Out of debt, out of danger." Rather keep out of the shop over the way for a week than rely upon money not yet due. Debt often becomes a terrible burden on the mind, and frequently leads to all sorts of crafty ways and devices to screw money out of parents or others.

*Your  
strength in  
Christ.*

**A**NOTHER principle you must also cherish. *All your strength for right-doing is in Christ.* Your best purposes and strongest resolutions will fail if you depend only on yourself. His word assures you of it: "Apart from me ye can do nothing" (John xv. 5, R. Version). Cut off the branch from the stem and it must fade and wither and die. And what can you do without Christ, but grow worse and worse, till at last you are finally separated from the company of Christ's faithful people? Therefore constantly depend on Jesus for

all you want. Always be mindful of your own inability and proneness to fall. At the same time remember that there is in Christ for you abundance of grace and strength. Constant prayer and humble trust in Jesus never fail.

I could not do without Thee ;  
I cannot stand alone ;  
I have no strength or goodness,  
No wisdom of my own ;  
But Thou, beloved Saviour,  
Art all in all to me,  
And perfect strength in weakness  
Is theirs who lean on Thee.

F. R. HAVERGAL.

VIII.

Take Heed to your Habits.

**T**HIS was the second piece of good advice the Bishop gave, and there could not be a better. We all know that our habits become part of our very selves. Those which you form as a lad will stick to you as a man. Even in the least things habit exercises a wonderful power. I have heard of a lecturer at one of our Universities who had a peculiar habit of twisting a particular button whilst speaking. For mischief, some young fellows managed to get hold of his coat and cut off the button, and when he came to give his next lecture, and found the button gone, he could scarcely get on with his address.

Therefore take pains to keep clear of bad habits, and to form good ones.



A doctor once told me that it took him a whole year to learn to smoke. A lesson of perseverance, thought I. If a man will take such trouble to learn a habit that is no great acquisition, we might take more pains to learn habits that will be helpful to us.



WORD or two here about this said habit of *About smoking.* smoking. I wish I could persuade you never to adopt it. It is a very expensive luxury, and is often connected with the habit of taking stimulants. Besides, if the habit is never acquired, it is never missed. And for young fellows under two or three and twenty, the testimony of medical men of the first rank assures us that it is really injurious to health. It deranges the various functions of the body, and in many ways leads to mischief in days to come. I believe that both our money and our health are talents given us of God, and that we ought to put them to the very best account. For all these reasons I do hope you will take the wiser part. If you would act from the highest motive, and set before yourself the highest standard in this and similar matters, deny yourself and cast away that which

certainly will be of no advantage to you in the battle of life.

*Betting.*

**T**HERE is another evil of a far worse character on which I should like to plead with you. Betting and gambling of every kind is a downright curse and misery to thousands. It is a habit which in lesser shapes is often formed at school, and often follows a young lad through life. None can tell the mischief bound up with it. When any one is thoroughly bitten, it gives him no rest. It unfits him for study, or business, or careful attention to anything. It brings with it terrible selfishness, and leads to endless deceit, and often to fraud, forgery, or suicide. It lands many in the bankruptcy court, and not a few in a gaol. Avoid this snare from the beginning. Never make a bet or take one. Avoid "The Sportsman" as you would a garment conveying some deadly disease. Avoid all playing for money at cards, billiards, and every other game. And do your best to keep the feet of others out of the same net.

**I** HAVE a young friend who for once ventured *A wise course.* to play for money, and he won a very large sum. But he was afraid to touch a shilling of it. He knew the temptation it might prove to him. So he kept his hand from taking it, and I have no doubt he is far richer now than if he had been led into this evil.\*

**M**IND your habits as to the sort of books you *As to books.* read. You may accustom yourself to almost any kind of reading. You may sit down and devour a trashy novel, until your taste is degraded, and you care for nothing better. Or, with a little self-determination at first, you may find the greatest possible pleasure in a good book of history or other more bracing literature. Before you are twenty you may acquire a taste for good reading that will be a strength to you as long as you live.


\* I have touched more fully on this subject in another work—"Strong and Free, a Book for Young Men," and therefore will not add more here.


*Your  
words.*

**M**IND your habits as to the language you use. Beware of a multitude of words. "Two ears to one tongue," says a Turkish proverb, "therefore hear twice as much as you speak."

"Great talkers are like broken pitchers," says a Persian proverb, "everything runs out of them." Beware also what words you use. Guard well your lips. Speak always as a Christian and as a gentleman. Never let your words have any taint of deceit or untruthfulness about them. Never under any provocation utter anything approaching an oath. Never let an impure suggestion or anything profane come out of your mouth. Watch against all evil speaking of others, or insinuations of blame that you would be afraid to put more plainly. Avoid all low, slang expressions, that savour more of the tavern than of a school for gentlemen's sons. Check yourself at once when about to utter anything in malice or revenge. Don't speak in a passion. You cannot tell the injury that a single wicked or passionate word may do. A single spark may set fire to a house, and a whole street may be burnt down in consequence. And so a brief word may

go forth on its deadly errand and a whole harvest of sin or trouble may arise from it.

“ WORD once spoken cannot be brought back *A true saying.* by a chariot and four horses.” It is true, therefore stop a moment ere you speak it. Let all your words be uttered before God, remembering that to Him an account must be rendered. Let them be steeped in kindliness and love, and guided by wisdom, forbearance, and genuine sincerity and truth. May the words be fulfilled in you,—“The lips of the righteous feed many,” and “The mouth of the righteous is a well of life.”

 VOID the habit of making excuses for every *Excuses.* fault you commit. It is a very old habit, for it comes down to us from our first parents. Adam had his excuse ready, and laid his sin at the door of his wife. Eve had her excuse, and laid it at the door of the serpent. And self-love and a deceitful heart will ever be prompting excuses even for the most glaring faults and inconsistencies. Perhaps nowhere does this habit find more scope than amongst school-boys. Instead of adding more of my own on this

point, I would ask you to consider well a few admirable remarks, as quoted by Canon Farrar in "The Days of our Youth":—

*From Dr.  
Vaughan.*

"Excuse-making is the scourge of boyhood and of school. I might venture, perhaps, to refer even in this place to a very common and familiar form of excuse, in which one of you, being late for a school engagement, pleads that his watch was wrong. Perhaps it was, and yet several things may go to make this a mere excuse; perhaps he knew beforehand that it was wrong, perhaps he might have prevented it from being wrong, or perhaps he had other means of information within reach had he used them, but refrained from doing so that he might keep his excuse. And when any obvious duty is neglected, each of those who is thus failing has his excuse—his excuse to himself, to his parents, to his masters, his excuse varying a little with the day, but substantially the same each day, capable of modification or reproduction at pleasure, and sufficient, at all events, to palliate self-reproach, if not to inspire confidence. And thus there are those who never can be surprised into a frank confession. They are always armed against blame. The fault was not

theirs; they were interrupted; they were tired; they thought they knew it; they thought they should have had time; they had meant to get up early; they had learnt every part of the lesson but that one line; they could have answered everything except that one question; they were only just late; they forgot;—anything, in fact, and everything but a frank admission of fault; and so on, through a labyrinth of pleas and evasions—in one plain word, excuses—till a miserable habit is formed, and all room for the operation of a candid self-judgment is precluded and barred. And when special pleas are exhausted, they find an excuse in their very failings: they are so indolent, they say, constitutionally; they are so weak, so irresolute, so procrastinating, in the tone, it may be, of regret or evasion, but still with the effect of apologising for the less fault by the greater, for the particular by the general, of escaping censure for the fault by the help of the failing.”



GET into the habit of thinking twice before you act once. I do not mean that you should always be hesitating and uncertain in life, afraid to

*Thought  
before  
action.*

err, and so never taking a fixed and steady course. This is an evil which has marred many a life. But I mean that in important matters you should look all round it before you put your foot down, and take a step you cannot retrace. It is said—"Hurry is only good for catching flies." But "slow and sure" often wins the day. When you are about to do anything of real importance, it will be no hindrance if you give a quiet half hour to turn it over in your mind. Is it thoroughly right as before God? What will be its effect on myself? What will be its issue to others? And if it be my plain duty to do this, by what means can I best accomplish it?

In this way many a mistake will be avoided, and many a pitfall escaped. You all see more clearly the path before you, and with true zeal and alacrity and fixedness of purpose you will be able to press on to the end in view.

"Thorough."

**A**NOTHER habit I would name. *Cultivate the spirit of "thorough" in whatsoever you undertake.* Sloth and idleness, a sort of listless, do-nothing existence, is a living death. If you permit it to get



the upper hand, you will lose in everything. You will get all blanks in life, and no prizes. You will fail in games, and fail in lessons, and fail in examinations, and fail in business or profession, whatever it may be. But do your very best in all you touch, and if you sometimes miss your aim, you will still oftener succeed.

A friend was telling me the other day of an expression used to him when he was boating at Cambridge. "No. 5 *must put his back into it.*" This is just what you need. "PUT YOUR BACK" into everything—lessons, work of all kinds, recreation, whatever you touch. It will draw out all the power you possess, and you will be worth ten times as much as you would if you were sluggish and easy-going and half-hearted.

**I** ONLY heard a day or two ago something about one who has reached the highest position in the English Church. It was told me by a friend who knew him well when he was at school, and it was known by all his schoolfellows, that whatever he went in for, it was his rule to do it with all his might. Let it be so with you. Whether your

*The Archbishop of Canterbury.*

gifts are few or many, whatever the position which you aim at filling, beware of the rust of lazy, negligent habits, and be up and doing. Make the best of your time and opportunities. Life is all too short for half your work, and therefore you do well to lose none of it.

To breathe, and wake, and sleep,  
To smile, to sigh, to grieve ;  
To move in idleness through earth,  
This, this is not to live !  
Make haste, O man, to live.

Make haste, O man, to do  
Whatever must be done,  
Thou hast no time to lose in sloth,  
Thy day will soon be gone:  
Make haste, O man, to live.—BONAR.

IX.

Take Heed to your Companions.

**H**ERE was the third piece of Episcopal counsel, *The choice of friends.* and it is closely linked with the two former.

Both your principles and habits will be influenced by those with whom you most associate. We naturally long for pleasant society and good company. "A single coal burns not well; a single traveller finds the way heavy." I like, too, the inimitable exaggeration of a proverb quoted by Archbishop Trench: "The eye of a needle is large enough for two friends, but the whole world is not large enough for two enemies."

But when you make a friend, take care he is good company! He may be capital at games, and yet his society at other times may do you but very little good.

"Do not tread, doggie, in a wolf's footsteps; he

will turn round and eat you." \* Perhaps he may, perhaps he may not, but *some one may mistake you for the wolf* and treat you accordingly !

Or I would put the danger you incur in another light. You know bird-catchers often put a bird in a cage with the door shut, and then place it in open field with another cage beside it with the door open. So the bird sings, and another comes and finds its way into the empty cage, so the man has two prisoners instead of one. Very frequently the great enemy acts in the same way. By means of one wicked lad he draws in a second ; yea, and perhaps a dozen are drawn into evil ways by one who uses bad influence over the rest.

*Avoid  
black sheep.*

**T**HERE are black sheep in every school, but it is your own fault if you are led astray by them. When you see a lad acting in a base, low way, trying to deceive the master, encouraging others to tell lies, to shirk their duty, making light of Scripture, using foul language, or in any other way showing that he is actuated by a wrong spirit,

\* This and several other proverbs are quoted from a very valuable book—"Eastern Proverbs and Emblems," by the Rev. J. Long.

have nothing to do with him. Don't be afraid of him, and do not through fear try to please him. Neither be anxious to be his friend because he is clever or attractive, or has a good voice, or is full of spirits. And be specially careful about your companionships when you first go to school. I remember a young fellow at college making friends of some fast young men when he first came up, but they were the plague of his life all through his course. Because afterwards he saw it was better to avoid them, they nailed up his door, and were always playing tricks upon him. You will find it the same at school. Companions may be a hindrance. Therefore, when you first go up, quietly take stock of those you find there. See what they are worth. See how they act and speak. Then by and by you will be quite safe if you draw nearer to one and another whose life and talk has the true ring about it.

**A**ND I think you will find it best not to go too *A useful hint.* much with those who are years older than yourself. Often older boys take up with one who is high in the school though very much younger, but it

is frequently an injury to him rather than a benefit. He is shunned by lads of his own age, with whom he would be far happier, and whose talk would be more suitable to his taste.

*Witness  
for Christ.*

**A**MONGST your companions be not afraid of speaking a word for Christ. If you love Him yourself, try to help and encourage others to do so. In many a school I have known of two or three or four meeting once a week to read a few verses in the Bible, and to pray together. Of course there needs wisdom in doing anything of this kind. There needs a previous consideration and prayer for God's guidance. Those who meet must be pretty much of one mind. And everything must be done without the least attempt at display, and in a simple, natural way. Where this is the case, I believe God honours such an effort. There is a mutual strengthening in a right course. And words so spoken will not be forgotten hereafter.

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him

for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon  
His name (Mal. iii. 16).

Come, brothers, let us onward  
Hand in hand still go,  
Each helping one another  
Through all the way below.  
One family of love—  
Oh, let no voice of strife be heard,  
No discord by the angel-guard  
Who watch us from above.

Then boldly let us venture,  
This, this is worth the cost !  
Though dangers we encounter,  
Though everything is lost.  
Oh, world ! How vain thy call !  
We follow Him who went before,  
We follow to the eternal shore,  
Jesus, our all in all !

## X.

**About School Mottoes.**

**I**T is worth noticing that nearly all our large public schools have some chosen thought or pithy Latin proverb connected with them. In some instances a whole volume of practical wisdom is wrapped up in half a dozen words or less. Many of these are given in two interesting plates of the coats of arms of many ancient and modern foundations in the fourth volume of the "Boy's Own Paper."

This chapter refers to a few of them. Possibly you may find a thought or two about the motto of your own school. If not, it will not be a lost half hour if I try to fix one or other in your memory. It may prove like a lamp on some dark night, or like a sign-post in an unknown land; and if you follow its direction, you may be spared many a



weary footstep, and save many a moment that might otherwise be worse than wasted.

The first motto I will touch upon seems to me worth a mint of gold. It is a short one belonging to St. Paul's School:—

“DOCE, DISCE, AUT DISCEDE!”

**N**O drones in this hive. No loiterers in this camp! Have your work and do it, whether *“Teach, learn, or depart!”* as teacher or scholar, or take your baggage, and be off! Capital! It's the lesson of all lessons for the schoolboy. What brings you here, if not to learn? An idler at school, by petty deceits scrambling somehow through his lessons, knowing no more this year than last, what can he do but learn or teach wickedness, and then go out into the world, to be a pest of society, a wastrel if he has money, and possibly a pauper or a criminal before long if he have none? Don't despise a word of caution on this matter. You may not be clever, but make the most of the brains you have. Often in the race of school or college life, the tortoise outruns the hare. The sharp lad who has plenty of “*vous*,” but who won't work, who oversleeps himself in the morning, who

will not take the trouble to be accurate in repetition, who takes no trouble to mark new words or new phrases in Livy or Horace, such a one is often beaten hollow by one who has not half the wits, but plods on patiently day by day, and by dint of sheer hard work takes a good place in the examination or in the tripos.

A motto from Rugby gives the same idea—

"NIHIL SINE LABORANDO."

*No pains,  
no gains.*

**N**O reaping without ploughing and sowing. There must be real, persevering toil, even to weariness, in those days of competition, if you are to achieve any solid success. And there is one encouragement in this for those who are fond of games. I am sure none so thoroughly enjoy cricket and football as those who have had two or three hours' stiff tug at a classic author, or a bit of book-work or problem in mathematics. There is such a joyous rebound! such a satisfaction that the work has been mastered, and then the rush of physical energy in the fresh air and the open field.

Whilst on this motto we should scarcely forget the noble saying of Luther—"Orare est laborare."

Your work is good, but God's work in you and for you is still better, and when you join true prayer with toil and pains, your work will be doubly profitable.

God's help will not be withheld, and His favour will attend all you do.



BRIGHT constellation of mottoes comes in here, telling the secret of all true success in study. If it be too true that in some of our board schools the Bible, and prayer, and all religious teaching are shut out, and there seems written up over the door "No God here," it cannot be so, in principle at least, with many of our large foundations. The blazoned crest would cry out against them, if Christian teaching were cast aside.

*The teaching of religious truth.*

We have Marlborough—" *Dat Deus incrementum*," and Merchant Taylors' still more fully—" *Homo plantat, homo irrigat, sed Deus dat incrementum*," "Man plants, man waters, but God gives the increase." We have from Charterhouse—" *Deo dante dedi*," "Only as God gives can man give;" from Dulwich—" *Deter gloria soli Deo*," "To God alone be the glory;" from the Mercers' School—" *Honor*

*Deo ;*" from the ancient Cathedral School of Wells—" *Credo in Jesum Christum filium,*" the beginning of the second paragraph of the Creed ; from the Stationers' School—" *Verbum Domini manet in æternum,*" "The word of the Lord remaineth for ever." And in close harmony with all these, the very best and noblest of all mottoes, we have others seeking directly for Divine aid : "*God grant grace,*" from the Grocers ; "*Domine, dirige nos,*" "Lord, direct us," from "the City of London ;" and from Brighton College perhaps the most suitable of all prayers for a school or college—" *Fiat lux,*" "Let there be light."

*Maintain  
the autho-  
rity of Holy  
Scripture.*

**M**AY the spirit of these various gems of truth actuate all our teachers and professors! Outside the Word of God, the pure faith as it is in Christ, there is no rest for the sole of the foot. Without it there can be no settled peace amidst life's troublesome waves, no firm foundation for moral conduct, no steadfast hope when life's work is done. In these days our lads want a sound religious education, fixed on the basis of Holy Scripture, as plainly inculcated in the Articles and

Services of the Church of England. We want an education free from the superstition of the Romish Church on the one hand, and from the doubt and uncertainty that pervades so large a portion of our literature on the other. May God make all our schools and universities sound in the faith, and may those who have authority in them be steadfast in holding fast the faithful Word!

I must not leave out the lesson that comes to us from the old foundation so near the castle where our Queen at times resides.

“FLOREAT ETONA”

**S**EEMS to me to suggest the idea of a wide-*A lesson from Eton.*  
spreading vine, with its branches stretching out in all directions. In Church and State, in all the learned professions, as officers in the army and in the navy, we have not a few who have come from this foundation. And may each and all help to fulfil their motto! Be as a fruitful bough covered with rich clusters. Let there be a high moral tone about every word you utter and every action of your life. Let there be a right aim and motive to do all to the glory of God. Let there be a steadfast cleaving to

Him who is both the stem and root of true spiritual life, and apart from whom you can do nothing.

"STET FORTUNA DOMUS," from Harrow, may come in here. The lesson is the same. Only can the house "abide steadfast in good fortune" by the aid of her own children. As each stands firm in high principle, in zeal for study, in the various graces that adorn a young man, so surely will her name remain as a name of honour from one generation of her disciples to another.

*Stand up  
for Old  
England!*

**F**ROM Westminster we have a message that no true English lad will reckon of small moment.

"IN PATRIAM POPULUMQUE" calls upon each one to stand up manfully for the land of his birth. Cherish the spirit of a true patriot! It is no bad thing to join the Volunteers when old enough, if you take heed to your colours as a soldier of the Great King. And remember every good man is as sound timber, and every bad man is as a rotten plank, in the ship of England's welfare and prosperity. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." "Them that honour

me I will honour, but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

Therefore, if you would be a blessing and not a curse to Old England, stand firm on the side of truth, of righteousness, of godliness. Be a faithful servant of the living God, and for your sake good and not evil will come to your Island Home.

From Winchester we gain a thought. Those ancient cloisters will permit no visitor to forget that from one of her children comes our old Evening hymn—

"Glory to Thee, my God, this night,  
For all the blessings of the light."

But we may well remember also the call to a spirit of courteous and gentle demeanour which we gather from her short motto.

"MANNERS MAKYTH MAN"

**T**IS a word that deserves no mean place in *The true gentleman.* our regard. To be a true Christian is the first thing, and the second is closely linked with it—to be a true gentleman.

Always bear in mind the meaning of this latter word. If to be a "lady" means to be "lafdig," *a loaf-giver, a true liberal soul*, delighting to stretch out a bountiful hand to the poor and needy, so also a "gentleman" is one who eschews all rough and coarse words and ways, and studies to be "gentle" wherever he goes. Where this is found it adds greatly to the value of those sterling qualities which of course are of primary importance. Cultivate this habit. Cast away all haughtiness, foppishness, and self-conceit.

*Evils to be avoided.*

**I**N conversation avoid all loud, boisterous talk and noisy declamation and self - assertion, and manifest a quiet self-control side by side with a moral courage that will long outlive the sham bravery of the boaster. And at meal-time do not smack your lips and eat as if you were starving and had only five minutes' chance of getting anything! I shall never forget my first day at Hall at Cambridge. A young fellow came in and sat down just opposite to me. He took the joint and cut round after round of the fillet of veal, and then, with a huge heap of



vegetables, commenced his task. How he ate, and how much he ate, I could never describe, but I soon discovered that he knew nothing of the behaviour of a gentleman, and before long he had left the University and was feeding sheep in the sheep-walks of Australia!

I will close with a word or two about three other mottoes.

**H**ERE is one from Repton, a play upon the *From Repton.*  
founder's name, Sir John Port.

"PORTA VACAT CULPA," "The gate is free from blame," may teach a young brother that your school should suffer no blame through you, that never by your fault should any blame attach to the school where you were educated. Only a few days ago I heard of some medical students in London who were sadly given to vicious and low habits. When questioned about them, they had but one answer, that "they had learnt them at school." In such a case, "Porta *non* vacat culpa," and great is the guilt of the one, or more, through whom the evil was learnt.

*From  
Shrews-  
bury.*



**A**NOTHER motto, one from Shrewsbury, cuts deep, and goes to the very core—"INTUS SI RECTE, NE LABORA," "If all be right within, trouble about nothing." Where the works of a clock are clean and in good order, no fear but the hands will move aright and the striker strike the true hour. It will be so with you. If your heart is right, sound in principle, guided by God's truth, loving the good and hating the evil, then all will go well. The hands will do their work, the feet will not run out of bounds or into bad company, eyes and ears and lips will fulfil their office, and all will work in harmony for your own profit, the good of your schoolfellows, and the glory of God.

*The heart  
must be  
right.*



**A**YOUNG friend, Is thy heart right within? Is it guided by God's loving Spirit? Is there a ready yielding to the voice of conscience? Is there true purity, genuine sincerity of aim and purpose? Is there an utter abhorrence of all deceit, defilement, and every work of the devil?

I would commend to you the frequent use of the Communion Collect, so forcibly expounded by

the Dean of Norwich in his valuable work on the Collects: "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

**S**IDE by side with the last, I may add the *From Haileybury.*  
motto from Haileybury:

"SURSUM CORDA."

UP WITH YOUR HEARTS! Don't bury them in pelf or pleasure, or petty cares, or profitless toil, or even in the pursuits of laudable ambition, but lift them up to the very throne of God. Let nothing lower satisfy your desires. Let no earthly thing be as a chain or a prison to fix your heart below.

**A** STORY is told of an American capitalist who *of a sorrowful picture.*  
had risen from the ranks to the possession of great wealth. He took a friend to the top of his house, of which the roof was flat, and where he often went out. He told him how he came as a poor boy

years ago, and what he had acquired. He pointed in one direction to the fields covered with flocks and herds, and said—"All those fields and all those cattle are mine." In another direction he pointed to a thriving town with its factories and warehouses and dwelling-places, and said—"All is mine." And so all round his house to every point of the compass.

At length his friend pointed upwards and said—"What have you there?" Ah, then he was silent. Past seventy, and yet no treasure above, no hope in God, no prospect of heaven, all he possessed was of the earth, earthy, and soon all must be left behind.

*A wiser  
choice.*

**D**O you choose, my young friend, a better portion than this! "Sursum corda." "Lay up treasure in heaven." "Set your affection on things above." Seek to know Christ as your Everlasting Friend. Look up to Him as your unfailing Intercessor, and through Him draw nigh to the Father. "Sursum corda!" "Like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God." "O God, Thou art my God, early

will I seek Thee. My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh also longeth after Thee in a barren and dry land, where no water is." "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."

Joy everywhere, for God is everywhere ;—  
His children need not roam :  
He bids them ever come,  
In Him to find their home.

Joy everywhere, for Work is everywhere ;—  
In work God finds His rest,  
His joy His works attest,  
Most like Him the most blest.

Joy everywhere, for Love is everywhere ;—  
God's joy we all can prove,  
He calls us to His love,  
To reach the life above.

Joy everywhere, for Christ is everywhere ;—  
In Him all beauty lives,  
His joy He freely gives—  
Joy which all change outlives.

REV. W. P. BALFERN.

## XI.

## The Two Lakes.

**W**HEN I am out for a holiday I like to pick up something worth remembering for friends at home, and I usually find that when I look out for something, there is something not far off worth looking out for. Last year I was in the Engadine, and I learnt something that may suit my young friends who read these pages.

*A parable  
from the  
Engadine.*

**A**T the top of the Bernina Pass—one of the many passes in the south of Switzerland that lead into Italy—there are two little lakes, called the White and the Black Lake. From the soil through which the water passes, each derives the appearance which suggests its name. The two lakes lie very close together—only a few yards separate them. But there is one marked difference. The water from each takes a very opposite course.

The Black Lake discharges itself into the Inn, a tributary of the Danube, into which it therefore flows, and finally empties itself into the Black Sea.

The water from the White Lake makes for itself a course in a southerly direction. It finds its way into the Adda, then passes through Lake Como, joins the river Po, and at last issues in the Adriatic, laving the sunny shores of Italy some hundreds of miles distant from its old neighbour on the Bernina Pass.

**I**T has struck me that we have here something of *The course of two school-fellows.* a parable. It seems to me to resemble the course of two lads. In their schoolboy days they are brought close together. They belong to the same foundation, are brought under the same discipline, engage in the same pastimes and recreations, perhaps even sleep in the same dormitory and work in the same classroom. It may be they move on together from form to form, and are seldom far apart in the examination lists. Possibly, too, both have religious impressions, and at times desire to live Christian lives. Nevertheless, their course separates, and that of the one lies altogether in an opposite direction to that of the other.

*The Black  
Lake.*

**T**HE course of the Black Lake suggests to me the idea of a lad following his own evil propensities and walking in the ways of the ungodly. In spite of occasional convictions and reproofs of conscience, he never sincerely strives to resist sin or to do God's will. The power of darkness reigns within. There is a darkened understanding, shutting out the true knowledge of God. There is guilt on the conscience, making him afraid of the Divine presence. There is an increasing dominion of sin strengthening with his years.

And as he begins life, so he continues. He may be shielded by circumstances, and restrained from open vice. He may go to church Sunday by Sunday, and maintain a profession of religion; but there is no heart or reality about it. It exercises no authority over the inner man. It is only like a Sunday coat, worn on Sunday, but laid aside for the rest of the week.

*A homely  
proverb  
tells the  
tale.*

*"Though the ass goes to Mecca, he becomes not a pilgrim for this."*

**A**H! and though a man goes to church, and goes to Holy Communion, yet he may be no



true pilgrim to Zion, but a very fool in the sight of God. He may be as destitute of Divine grace as a brute beast is of sense and wisdom.

Ever remember that it is the aim and spirit of a man which constitutes him a true worshipper. All outward form and ceremony—all mere words of prayer and praise—are utterly valueless without a believing, loving heart.

**N**EARS ago a man had a sin burdening his conscience which he thought God could not forgive. He was near death, but one thought was a constant grief to him. "I have been such a hypocrite," said he. "Sunday after Sunday I have sat in my seat as if I were every whit a Christian; but all the while I was occupied with my business, planning my work, or thinking over letters I should write on the morrow." *A smitten conscience.*

But, possibly the course of the lad may be a still darker one. He may fall headlong into some great temptation. He may be ensnared by some deadly vice, or yield to some sin that may bring upon him shame and disgrace, and loss of all the comfort that this life affords. In any case, whilst the principle

of evil is uppermost, he departs further and further from God. The world takes up the whole room. Pure and undefiled religion finds no congenial soil. Any early desires for a higher and nobler life have utterly faded away. So he lives and so he dies. And what beyond? what follows this short life? What is the home of the immortal spirit?

*The tomb  
of Dean  
Alford.*

**T** REMEMBER once standing by the tomb of the late Dean Alford, who has left behind so noble a work in the interpretation of the New Testament. The words upon it are very forcible: "Diversorium viatoris Hierosolymem profiscentis" ("The inn of a traveller on the way to Jerusalem"). Could such a sentence be written over your grave? If you have been living a life without God, how could you find your joy in that glorious home where God is all? Nay, nay, my young friend, it will be far otherwise with you.

*Your end.*

**T** HE course of the Black Lake ends in the Black Sea. And what will be your end? Judge your own self. If you are not made meet for God's kingdom, if you have no love to Christ nor like-

ness to Him, if you have no sympathy with His people nor delight in His service, what could you do in heaven? What joy would you find there? What fellowship with the holy angels? How could you bear to look upon Him whom you had long slighted or scorned? Would not heaven itself be a very hell to you? Be not deceived. You will reap as you sow. You will go to your own place. You have hearkened to Satan's persuasions, and you will share his doom. You would not drink the cup of Divine grace, so you must drink, even to the dregs, the cup of Divine wrath and judgment. And the fault will be your own. You will never blame God, for you will see clearly that His love and mercy were free and boundless to all who would accept them. You will only blame your own blindness, neglect, and wilful unbelief. "From Thy wrath and everlasting damnation, good Lord, deliver us."

**T**HERE is another side to my parable. There is *A brighter picture.* light as well as darkness. There is righteousness and truth and the fear of God as well as sin and deceit and all iniquity. Sometimes very strangely

we see them both brought close together. One day I took up an "Album for Confessions," and there were two rather remarkable ones not far from each other. Both of them, I fancy, were written by young men, and both, I believe, represented the genuine sentiments of the writers. The question proposed was this—"What is your idea of the greatest misery?" The first answer was—"Sitting two hours in church." The second—"A guilty conscience."

Here was a contrast indeed! The one found it a weary bondage to give two hours to the worship of God. The other dreaded above all things the sin that would dishonour Him. Thank God, here and there are not a few lads who have the spirit of this latter.

*A blessed  
course.*

**T**HE White Lake gives me the idea of such a lad, and the happy, useful life he may lead. His whole course is entirely opposite to that pictured before. He has learnt the secret of true piety. He has upon him the white robe of a complete justification, for he has brought to the blood of sprinkling the sins and faults and neglects of early

life. By trusting in Jesus there has arisen within him an earnest desire for holiness, and he endeavours to trample under foot everything that he knows to be wrong. By daily prayer and meditation on the Scripture, he is strengthened to resist evil in whatever shape it may assault him. The world is to him a broken idol. He has seen that there is "nothing constant in it but its instability," and he has found something better than it can offer him. So he uses the world without abusing it, making it a sphere of blessed service for the Master he loves. His influence at Marlborough, or Harrow, at Rugby, or elsewhere, is all on the right side. He leaves a mark for good behind him. He is remembered by the masters with affection when he leaves. The remark of Dr. Arnold with respect to one who so lived at Rugby—Spencer Thornton—is an example in point: "I could take my hat off to that lad in the presence of the whole school" was his witness.

**T**HEN follow such a one from his school days *in later years.*  
right on through a thousand changing scenes.

In the bustle of an active city life, it may be, he

carries within the calm and quiet spirit, resting continually beneath the shadow of the Great Rock.

Or, as a physician, he uses wisely and faithfully his great opportunity, and often leaves behind a thought of true consolation to a suffering or dying patient.

Or, as a clergyman, his life and words alike are a witness for the truth, and by his zealous labours he guides many a soul into the way of peace.

Or perhaps, as a merchant or manufacturer, his plain, straightforward dealing makes him respected everywhere; and amongst those under him, the Christian is not lost in the master, for he never loses a chance, especially in sickness, of caring for their spiritual welfare.

About such a whole-hearted follower of Christ there will be no lack of peace and comfort. A bright and joyous spirit will attract and win others to a godly life.

*The joy of  
true reli-  
gion.*



CHRISTIAN man whom I knew was once in conversation with one who boasted of his unbelief. The infidel gloried in his freedom from restraint, and his power to enjoy this present life.

"I am far better off than you," said he to the other. "You are looking for a *bird in the bush*, a life of happiness hereafter, but I have a *bird in the hand*. I make the most of this present world, and leave the next to take care of itself."

"You make a great mistake," said the Christian; "I have a bird in the hand and a bird in the bush as well. I am far happier in this life than you are; and when your bird is dead and buried, my bird will live and go on singing for ever."

**T** MET a few weeks ago with another example *The new life.* of the peace and comfort which the religion of Jesus Christ often brings to the sincere disciple. A zealous Christian was speaking to the members of a working men's Bible-class. "Seven years ago, before I came to Jesus," he said, "I was so miserable that there was not a man on earth with whom I would not have exchanged places, but since I have known Christ, I have had such happiness that there is not one now with whom I would change."

Surely in some measure it must be so. The true Christian has an unfailing spring of happiness. He drinks of the fountain of living waters. In the

darkest hours he has by him a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. He has within the constant recompense that arises from obedience to God's commands. Deeds of kindness and efforts for the good of others come back in many a pleasant surprise. The Comforter makes His abode with him, and reveals to Him the depth and breadth of God's promises.

And hope whispers of the life beyond. There is a full ocean of bliss, which as yet we can but faintly surmise. There is a resting-place beyond this life, where sorrows cannot enter. There is a shore on which no tear is ever shed.

*An old  
legend.*



STORY is told of an old Norse king sitting one night in his great hall when the tempest was roaring without. The great fire threw its glare far out into the dark recesses of the hall, all the brighter for the storm and darkness around. While the king talked with his councillors, a bird flew in and passed over them, and out again at the great open window. "Such," said the king, "is the life of man: out of the darkness into the light, and then lost in the blackness and storm again." "Yes,



sire," answered an old courtier, "but the bird has its nest beyond."

"To the nest beyond ;  
Where the storm in peace subsideth,  
God's own love His children hideth."

To the nest beyond,  
Where for ever lost the sorrow,  
Pain, and conflict of the morrow.

To the nest beyond ;  
Where the Shepherd, near and tender,  
To His bosom folds the wanderer.

To the nest beyond,  
Where the Father all beholdeth,  
And His love each child enfoldeth—  
Oh, the sweet nest beyond !

—REV. W. P. BALFERN.

My young brother, is this the path you are treading and the hope that lies before you ? Is your present life something of a foretaste of the bright world of love ? Is there day by day a step in the right direction, a daily leaving behind the sin of the past, and a pressing forward to a higher and nobler future ?

**P**ERHAPS not. A secret voice tells you that *The call of love.* you are further from God to-day than at this time last year. You have a conscience less sensitive

to reproof, and habits of evil more strengthened and confirmed. But let there be an arrest on all this. Let there be a turning from the wrong path and an entrance into the right one. Before another day, before another hour, has passed, seek help from above. Lift up your heart in prayer for the aid of God's blessed Spirit. Take to assist you the exquisite words of our Litany, comprising in three or four sentences whatever is needful for you :

"That it may please Thee to give *me* true repentance, to forgive *me* all my sins, negligences, and ignorances, and to endue *me* with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, to amend my life according to Thy Holy Word."

All this Christ is pledged to give you, if you humbly and earnestly seek it.


*To one very  
far off.*



YOU may have been one of the worst lads in the school. Your evil influence may have cast a dark shadow over the lives of your fellows. You may have resisted the pleading of your parents, and gone right in opposition to their wishes. You may have been so often reproved by

those over you that they have almost given up hope for you. But here is an open door for a new life. Only acknowledge your sin. Only ask of Christ a new spirit and a new power, and he will give it all. "He is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins." He will give these to you. He will turn your heart to Himself, and freely forgive all past faults and iniquities.

At His cross there is found the assurance of complete forgiveness, and the power to rise superior to old temptations. Others have found it so, and you may also. And the way to find it is plainly revealed. Hear the testimony of one who rose to the very highest eminence as a physician, the discoverer of chloroform, and one who had honours heaped upon him from all quarters. Yet in spite of all this he needed the aid of another Physician; and whilst at the very height of prosperity, he became as a little child that he might find it.

"HEN I was a student at the University, I saw *Sir James Simpson.* a sight I never can forget—a man brought out to die. His arms were pinioned, his face was

already pale as death, thousands of eager eyes were upon him as he came up from the gaol. Did any friend come up and loose the rope, and say—'Put it round my neck ; I die instead ?' No, he underwent the penalty of the law. For many offences ? No, for one offence. He had stolen a money parcel from a stage-coach. He broke the law in one point, and died for it. It was the penalty of a changing human law, the last instance of death for that offence. But I saw another sight, it matters not when. I saw myself a sinner standing on the brink of ruin, deserving nought but hell. For one offence ? No ; for many, many sins committed against the unchanging laws of God. But again I looked, and I saw Jesus, my Substitute, scourged in my stead, and dying on the cross for me. I looked, I cried, and I was forgiven."

Thus spoke this great man in the Free Church Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, not ashamed to confess the Saviour who had redeemed him, and striving by all means to win others to His kingdom.

*A parting  
wish.*

**M**AY you, far earlier in life than he, gain the same inestimable benefit ! May you know

what it is to be forgiven and saved, and made a new creature in Christ! May you, too, never be ashamed to own Christ and to confess all that He has done for you. Good-bye, my young friend. I may never see your face on earth, but may we meet in the great Home above! May the words of this little book afford you some guidance and light along the difficult path of life. And if they do, may you go forward in the service of your King, and be zealous to draw others to Him! I will close with reminding you of a promise which seems to me one of the very greatest in the whole Bible: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3).

Poor is all that I can offer,  
Soul and body, while I live;  
Take it, O my Saviour, take it,  
I have nothing more to give.

Come, and in this heart remain,  
Let each enemy be slain;  
Let me live and die with Thee:  
To Thy kingdom welcome me!

XII.

Prayers for General Use.

**D**EFEND, O Lord, me, Thy child, with Thy heavenly grace, that I may continue Thine for ever, and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit ever more and more until I come to Thy everlasting kingdom. Amen.

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**G**OD, my heavenly Father, look upon me in Thy love. Deal not with me after my sins, nor reward me according to mine iniquities. Freely forgive me, for Christ's sake, everything I have done amiss. Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Make me to hate every evil way, and to love Thee better than all the world. Watch over me night and day, and preserve me from all temptation. O Father, bless me, and make me a blessing, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

*A Morning Prayer.*

HEAVENLY Father, I thank Thee for Thy care and protection during the past night. I thank Thee that Thou hast strengthened me for the duties of this day.

Waken my heart to praise and serve Thee. Let the light of Thy love shine brightly within my heart. Send me the power and comfort of Thy Holy Spirit. Help me this day to do all my work for Thee. Give me a cheerful spirit, and enable me to throw heart and soul into my studies. May I cultivate every talent Thou hast given, and each day become more fitted to be useful to those around me.

O Father, may I see Thee always by me, and strive to please Thee all the day long. Shield me in the hour of danger, and defend me against every assault of the enemy.

Hear this my humble petition, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

---

## An Evening Prayer.

**A**LMIGHTY GOD, my Father in Christ Jesus, I commit myself now to Thy merciful care and keeping. I bless Thee for all Thy goodness through this day, and I pray Thee abide with me through the hours of sleep. May no harm come nigh me, and may I rest in peace and quietness.

Father, I confess to Thee my many sins. I have forgotten Thee, and followed too much the desires of my own heart. I have sought the praise of men rather than Thy love and favour. I have pleased myself rather than Thee. Oh forgive me whatever I have done amiss this day. Look upon Him who died for my sins, and wash me in His precious blood.

Most merciful Father, hear these my prayers. Assure me of Thy free forgiveness. Fill me with Thy Holy Spirit. Bless my father and mother and all I love. Let my last thoughts this night be of Thee, and do for me far better than I ask or think, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

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*A Prayer for Sunday Morning.*

GOD, I praise Thee for giving to me another day of rest. May my thoughts this day be of Thee. Keep me from all vain and foolish talk. Keep me from misusing this holy day.

O Father, open my heart and unseal my ear to listen to Thy truth. Whatever I may hear this day in Thy house, may I remember and practise it. Let not Satan take away the good seed out of my heart. Teach me the evil of sin and the blessedness of Thy fear and love. Give me a pleasure in sacred things. If during the week I have turned away from Thee, oh, bring me back, and restore me to Thy fold.

Blessed Saviour, teach me to desire the one thing needful. Show me that without Thee I can never be truly happy.

Remind me that only Thy love and mercy can satisfy my soul. O Lord Jesus, Thou hast loved me, and given Thyself for me. May I love Thee in return, and give Thee all I have. May I give Thee my best days, and may they all be spent for Thee.

Make every Sunday a step on the ladder to

heaven ; and when all are past, may I be found ready and be received into Thy kingdom. O Lord, be with me, and sanctify me both in body and soul, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

---

**On Reading the Bible.**



MERCIFUL Lord, who hast granted me the rich and precious jewel of Thy Holy Word, assist me by Thy Spirit that I may read it aright. Keep me from wandering thoughts, and help me to think over its precepts and promises. Sanctify me by Thy truth, and make me more like Christ. Reveal to me more of Thy great love, and enlighten the eyes of my understanding that I may daily gain more knowledge of Thee and of Thy Son Jesus Christ. O Lord, teach me Thy statutes, and lead me in the right way, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

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**For the First Term at School.**



MY God, my Father, I come to ask Thy guidance and help. Thou hast bidden me acknowledge Thee in all my ways. O Lord, counsel

and direct me in all that lies before me. Go forth with me and stand by me through the whole of this coming term.

Gracious and merciful Saviour, enable me to live and act as Thy true disciple. Give me the assurance that Thou hast received and forgiven me. May I look up to Thee as my Shepherd, my Master, and my Friend. Strengthen my faith in Thy promises, and teach me to lean wholly on Thy grace.

If misjudged or ill-treated, may I always flee to Thee as my hiding-place. Succour and comfort me in every trouble. Blessed Lord, make me to glorify Thee in everything I say and do. Make me brave and courageous in all that is right. Make me gentle and forbearing towards any who may wrong me. Make me kind and considerate to all. Teach me to make good use of each passing day. Stir me up to diligence in whatever work or lessons I have to do. Fit me for future usefulness, and may I lose no opportunity for self-improvement.

O Father, keep me as the apple of Thine eye, and hide me under the shadow of Thy wing. Forgive me, for Christ's sake, all the sins of my youth, and endue me with true purity and grace. Hear

me, and fulfil these my desires, for Thy dear Son's sake. Amen.

---

*For Purity.*

**M**OST holy and merciful God, help me to draw nigh to Thee in Jesus' name. May I remember that without holiness no man can see Thy face, and that no unclean thing can enter Thy presence.

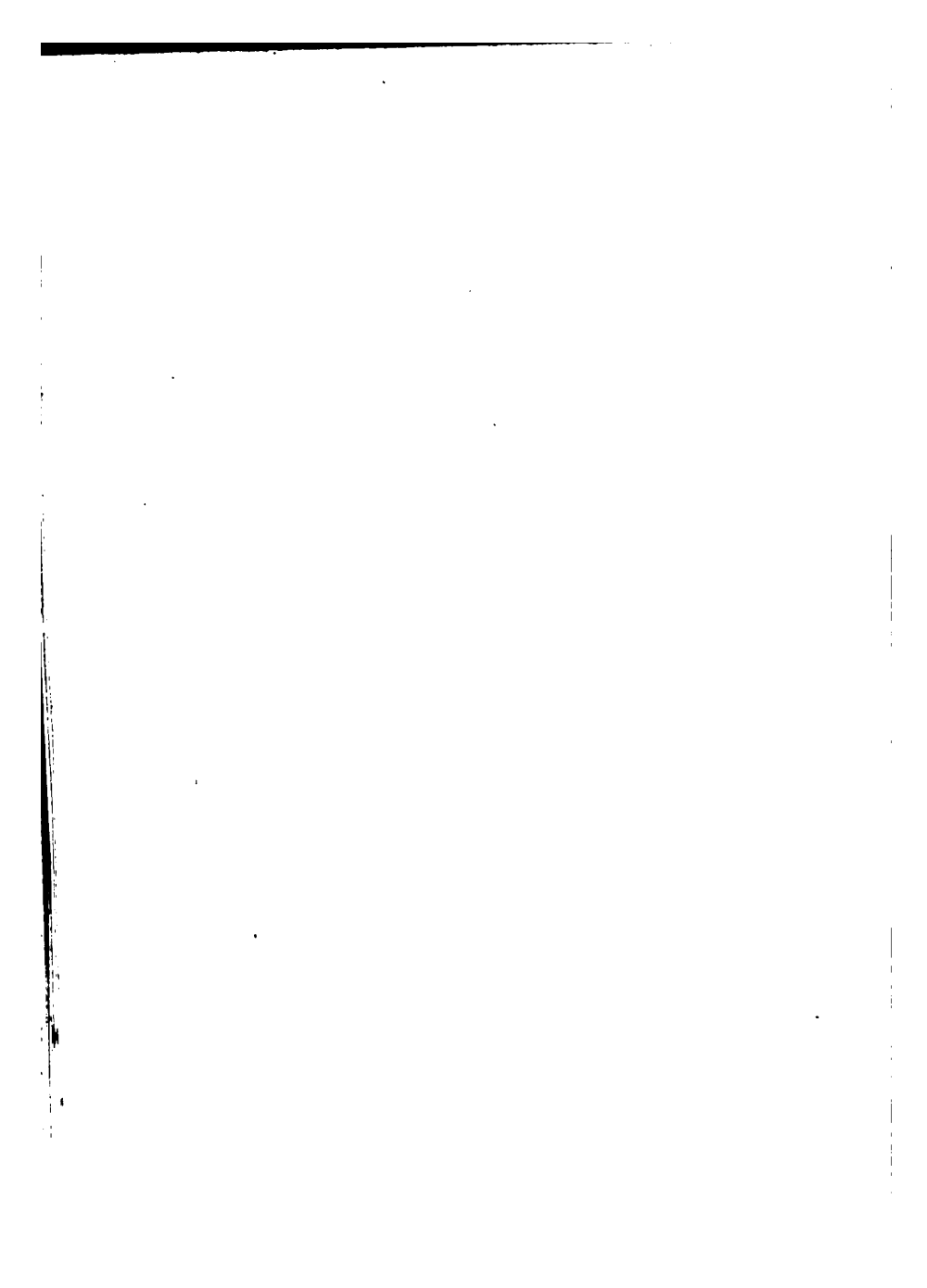
O Lord, I humble myself before Thee. Thou knowest all my sins. Cleanse me from every spot and stain of evil. Bestow on me the continued aid of Thy Spirit, that I may crucify the flesh and mortify the deeds of the body.

O Saviour, succour me in the hour of temptation. Keep me from every form of sin. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity. May I never utter a word that may do harm, or listen to anything that is polluting. Deliver me from every wrong thought, and fill my heart with thoughts of Thyself and Thy love. Bruise Satan under my feet shortly, and save me from every snare of the wicked, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

## Hints for Holy Living.

**T**HE following precepts are a mine of wealth to those who wish to live a true Christian life. They deserve to be written in letters of gold. Still better, may they be written on each heart by the finger of God's Holy Spirit!

1. *Live* as in the *sight* of God.
2. *Do* nothing you would not like God to *see*.
3. *Say* nothing you would not like God to *hear*.
4. *Write* nothing you would not like God to *read*.
5. *Go* to no place where you would not like God to *find* you.
6. *Read* no book of which you would not like God to say, "*Show it to Me.*"
7. Never *spend your time* in such a way that you would not like God to say, "*What are you doing?*"



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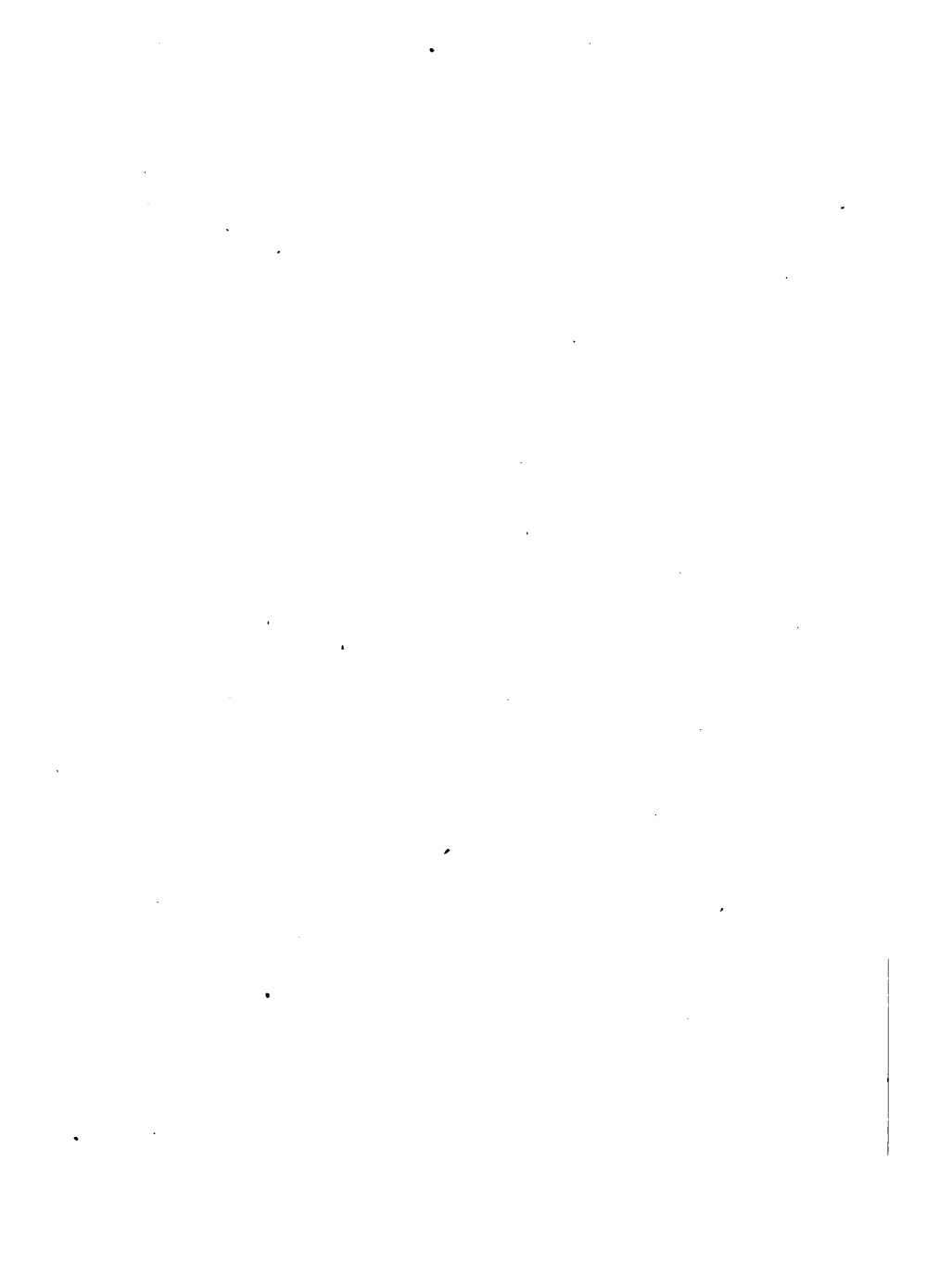
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